

ENGLISH ROADS OF  
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# Highroads of Literature

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## Book II.—Bards and Minstrels

THOMAS NELSON AND SONS, LTD.  
*London, Edinburgh, and New York*

1916









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## BOOK II.

### I. THE MINSTREL.

1. Look carefully at the picture on page 29. The scene is the dining-hall of a castle. The lord of the house, his wife, family, and friends are sitting together after the evening meal has been cleared away.

2. Now an old man with a flowing white beard comes into the hall. The old man greets the lord, and is warmly welcomed, for the evenings are apt to be dull unless a wandering minstrel arrives to charm the hours with song and story.

3. The old man tunes his harp strings, clears his throat, and begins to chant a lay. He sings of heroes long since dead and gone. He praises their warlike deeds in glowing words, which stir the hearts of the young men who hear him. They, too, will win great



renown, and minstrels shall sing of their deeds when their swords are rust and their bones are dust.

4. The men and women whom you see in the picture know nothing of one of the greatest joys of life. Books are scarce, and are



so costly that only rich men can afford to buy them. Few people except the monks can read them. Even kings do not know their letters.

5. You and I can always fill up our spare time by reading. In our days we think it a disgrace for a person not to be able to read. There are schools everywhere, and books are plentiful and cheap.

6. If we provide ourselves with a good book, time never hangs heavily on our hands. We can take down a good book from our shelves, and at once we have a delightful companion.

7. This companion will tell us stories, speak to us of far distant lands or far distant times, explain hard things to us, or fill our minds with beautiful thoughts. No matter how

poor or how humble we may be, we can choose our companions from the best and wisest of men, both living and dead.

8. Kings and nobles of olden times had no such companions. The minstrels were their only books. Some of these men were very skilful, and they composed not only the words of their songs, but the music as well. At first their songs were not written down. The minstrel carried them in his mind. Unless he taught them to other minstrels, his songs died with him.

9. The minstrels loved to sing of great heroes and their famous deeds. One minstrel would make a song about one part of a hero's life; another would sing of another part, and so on. In course of time there were very many of these songs, and they told the whole life story of the hero.

10. Then a man would collect together all the songs about this hero, and write them down. When this was done, they could never be lost. To-day we can read the songs of minstrels who have been dead for ages.



11. Do you remember the story of Ulysses, which I told you in Book I. ? It was sung by the minstrels of Greece nearly three thousand years ago, and was written down on sheep-skin about eight hundred years before the birth of Christ.

12. In your history books you read of a race of men who dwelt in the south of Norway and the north of Germany. Because their land was poor and barren they became sea-robbers. Afterwards they crossed the North Sea, and about thirteen hundred years ago became masters of the rich land of England.

13. Now there were minstrels among these sea-robbers long before they came to England, and many were the songs which they sang about their great heroes. When the

English settled in England they brought some of these songs with them, and about a hundred years later they were written down.

14. The oldest book of English songs tells us about a hero known as Beowulf. In later





lessons I shall tell you some stories from this famous old book. It is written on sheepskin, and may still be seen in the library of the British Museum.

---

## 2. THE MINSTREL BOY.

1. The minstrel boy to the war is gone—  
In the ranks of death you'll find him ;  
His father's sword he has girded on,  
And his wild harp slung behind him.  
“Land of song !” said the warrior bard,  
“Though all the world betrays thee,  
One sword at least thy rights shall guard,  
One faithful harp shall praise thee !”
2. The minstrel fell—but the foeman's chain  
Could not bring his proud soul under ;  
The harp he loved ne'er spoke again,  
For he tore its chords asunder,  
And said, “No chains shall sully thee,  
Thou soul of love and bravery ! •  
Thy songs were made for the brave and free ;  
They shall never sound in slavery !”

THOMAS MOORE.

## STORIES FROM BEOWULF.

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### 3. HOW GRENDEL HARRIED HEOROT.

1. In the days of old there was a king of Denmark named Hrothgar. He won much glory in battle, and gathered together much booty from many lands. So great was his fame that warriors flocked to him, and he was lord of a mighty troop of men.



2. Hrothgar needed a great hall in which his men could meet to feast together and to receive gifts from his hands. So a great palace of wood was built. It was lofty, and had wide gables, and nothing could destroy it

but fire. Hrothgar called the hall Heorot.

3. Every day at nightfall the king's men feasted in this hall. Every day they shouted with mirth, and every day the sound of the harp and the song of the minstrel were heard.

4. Now there was at this time an evil

monster named Grendel, who lived amidst the wild moors and fens. He was fierce and greedy, and he hated to see men enjoy the good gifts of life.

5. One night Grendel crept out of his lair, and went to the great hall. He prowled about until the feasting was at an end and the warriors lay asleep. Then he swooped down upon them, and seizing thirty of them carried them off to his den.

6. At break of day, when the warriors awoke, they found that Grendel had been among them, and had carried off their comrades. Then uprose a mighty weeping and wailing. When King Hrothgar came to the hall and heard the story, he, too, was sad at heart.

7. The next night Grendel came again and carried off more warriors. Then the men did not dare to sleep in the hall. Heorot was deserted, and the throne of Hrothgar, which was set up in it, stood empty.

8. For twelve years Grendel came and went, leaving slaughter in his train, and Hrothgar was helpless. He fought with him, but could not slay him, nor could he buy him off.



9. Sacrifices were made to the gods, and all sorts of plans were tried for getting rid of Grendel, but in vain. There was great sorrow and breaking of heart in the land.

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#### 4. THE COMING OF BEOWULF.

1. The grievous news crossed the seas, and men of other lands heard of the evil deeds of Grendel and of the woes of Hrothgar. Amongst those who heard the sad story was the great warrior Beowulf. He was the bravest and strongest of all living men.



2. Beowulf heard the story in his fatherland, and at once made up his mind to go and fight the monster. He prepared a ship in which to sail over the "swan's road" to Hrothgar's land, and chose fifteen brave men to be his companions.

3. Time passed on; the bark was ready and lay under the lee of a cliff. The warriors, clad in their armour, stepped on the prow, whilst their friends stored their arms and food in

the hold. Then the vessel was pushed off, its sails were set, and it darted bird-like over the waves.

4. On the second day Beowulf and his companions saw afar off the sea-cliffs, the bold headlands and the steep mountains of Hrothgar's land. In a short time their voyage was over. They ran their ship aground and made it fast. Then they put on their breastplates and thanked God that the voyage had been made easy for them.

5. Hrothgar's coast-guard stood on his rampart and saw the gleam of the bright shields and armour of Beowulf's men as they stepped ashore. Taking his spear in his hand and mounting his horse he rode hastily to the waterside.

6. "Who are ye," he asked, "who come hither in a ship, bearing arms? I am the coast-guard who keeps watch over the shore so that no enemy may come to harry us. Ye seem to be peaceful men and not foes, and one of you appears to be a mighty warrior. Tell me why ye come and tell me quickly."

7. Then Beowulf made answer that he and

his party had heard of Grendel, the great scourge of the land, and had come to help Hrothgar to overcome his foe. When he heard these words the watchman knew that the strangers were friends, and he bade them pass on with their arms and armour.

8. "I will guide you to Hrothgar," said he, "and meanwhile my comrades shall guard your ship and see that no man harms it." Then Beowulf and his men set out, their armour and the golden boars on their helmets glistening in the sun.

9. At length they saw before them the great hall of Heorot, the largest and finest dwelling on earth. Beowulf and his friends were astonished at it; they had never seen anything so great or so grand before. Then the coast-guard

turned his horse round and bade them farewell. "It is time for me to depart," said he. "May God keep you safe. I will go back to my post on the sea-shore."

10. When the strangers reached the hall they piled





their arms and sat down. Then Hrothgar's herald came forward and asked them whence and why they came. Beowulf told him who he was and why he had come, and the herald hastened to Hrothgar and begged him to speak with the noble stranger.

11. Now Hrothgar had met Beowulf some years before, and knew him to be a mighty warrior. So he said, "Bid Beowulf and his men come in to me. Tell them that they are welcome."

12. Then Beowulf entered the hall and told Hrothgar that he had heard of Gréndel and his evil doings, and was ready to fight him single-handed. He said that he would meet the monster without his sword and shield, for he scorned to take a mean advantage of his foe.



13. Hrothgar and Beowulf had a long talk, and then a great feast was spread and high revel was held. The warriors feasted and the minstrels sang. So passed the time until the night was far spent and Hrothgar departed to his abode.

## 5. BEOWULF'S FIGHT WITH GRENDEL.

1. Hrothgar's warriors now left the hall, but Beowulf and his men remained behind and awaited the coming of Grendel. Beowulf stripped off his iron breastplate, doffed his helmet, and handed his sword to a companion. He meant to meet the monster without arms, trusting only in his mighty strength.

2. Then he lay down upon his bed, and bade his comrades do likewise. He himself felt no fear, but some of his men were heavy of heart, for they had little hope of ever seeing their homes and kindred again.

3. In the dead of night Grendel left his den in the fens and strode along the misty slopes to the great hall. All within lay sleeping save one. Beowulf was awake, waiting and watching for the dreaded foe.

4. The great door was fastened with strong iron bands, but Grendel easily tore them away, and stepped on to the paved floor of the hall. He saw many men sleeping. "I will kill every man of them," said he, "ere the day dawns."



Hrothgar and his Warriors.



5. He snatched up a sleeping warrior, tore him asunder, and ate him. This done, he rushed on Beowulf and caught hold of him with his mighty claw. At once Beowulf gripped the arm of the monster as in a vice. Then Grendel knew that he had met his match, and tried to escape, but Beowulf held him fast.

6. The hero and the monster struggled fiercely, and the hall rang with shouts and cries. Beowulf and Grendel, locked in combat, dashed against the oaken walls, which would have given way had they not been held together by iron clamps. Grendel strove with all his might, but Beowulf was more than a match for him.

7. At length the monster uttered a great shriek, which struck awe into Hrothgar's men, who were gathered on the castle wall outside. Beowulf alone was unmoved; he still held the monster tight. His companions came to his aid, and struck at the foe with their swords. Alas! Grendel's magic made their blades powerless.

8. Beowulf now put forth all his strength,

(1,742)



and tore off the monster's arm. Grendel, sick to death, turned to flee, knowing well that the end of his life had come. He rushed from the hall, and sped to his den in a lake on the moors, leaving his arm and shoulder behind him.

9. In the morning Hrothgar's men flocked to the great hall, rejoicing greatly that at last their grim foe had been overcome. Some of them rode off to the lake in which the monster dwelt, and there they saw blood-red waves as though Grendel were tossing below in the pains of death.

10. Great was the joy of Hrothgar and his men. The hall was made ready for a feast, and the king and his warriors sat down to eat and drink.

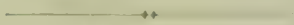
11. Then Hrothgar gave rich gifts to Beowulf—a banner, a breastplate, a helmet, a sword set with jewels, and eight horses covered with cloths of gold. Amongst the horses was Hrothgar's own war-steed. He also gave gifts to Beowulf's men.

12. Then came the minstrels, who sang to the harps, and made many songs in praise

of Beowulf. Mirth rose high and shouts of joy filled the hall. The queen, wearing her crown, now came in and gave a golden cup to Hrothgar, bidding him bestow it upon the hero. This he did, and then more costly presents were heaped on Beowulf.



13. At length Hrothgar left the hall, and his nobles lay down to sleep in the place which Beowulf had now made safe for them. At each man's head were his shield and sword and spear, so that he might be ready to ward off any sudden attack during the hours of darkness. Beowulf slept that night in Hrothgar's palace.



## 6. BEOWULF'S FIGHT WITH GRENDEL'S MOTHER.

I. All danger had not yet passed away. In a lake amidst the fens lived the fierce wolf-like witch who was the mother of Grendel. She brooded over her loss, and at nightfall set out for the great hall to avenge the death of her son.

2. At her coming the warriors seized their weapons and prepared to defend themselves. The witch entered the hall, and snatching up one of the nobles carried him off to her den. A great wail of sorrow arose, and once more Hrothgar was bowed down with grief.

3. At break of day the king called his warriors together and bade Beowulf join them. When he heard that Grendel's mother had carried off one of the nobles, he offered to go in search of her and slay her.

4. So Beowulf and the king, with a few companions, mounted their horses and rode across the wild moorland, and along narrow lonely paths, until they came to the blood-stained pool in which the mother of Grendel dwelt along with many sea-dragons. Beowulf slew one of these dragons with an arrow from his bow.

5. Then he donned his armour and his helmet, and took in his hand a magic sword which one of Hrothgar's men gave to him. This done, he made Hrothgar promise to



protect his trusty followers and send them safely home if he should perish in the fight.

6. After these words he plunged into the lake, and sank slowly to the place where Grendel's mother lay waiting for him. She seized Beowulf in her horrid claws, but his armour kept him from being wounded. Nevertheless she was able to drag him down through the water to the dry cavern in which she lived.

7. A great flame sprang up, and in its light Beowulf beheld the terrible monster. He struck at her with his sword, but the shining weapon did her no harm. Then the hero flung away his sword, and trusted once again to his mighty hand-grip.

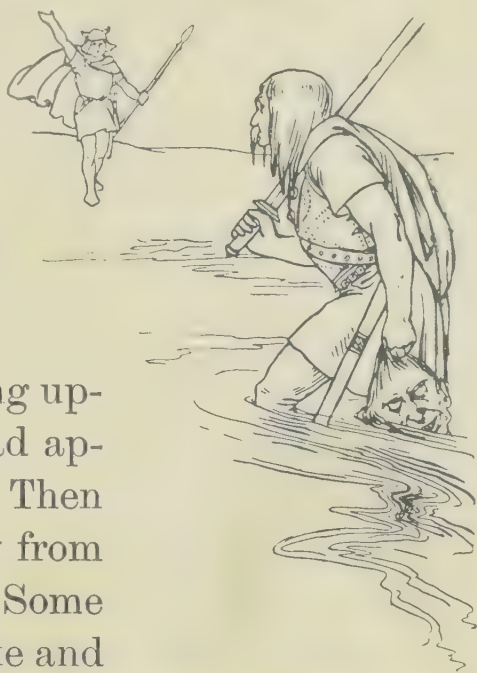
8. Long and fierce was the combat, but at length Grendel's mother overthrew Beowulf, and drawing her broad, keen dagger struck at his heart. But his breastplate saved him; the blow glanced off, and Beowulf struggled to his feet.

9. On the wall Beowulf saw an old sword of great size and weight. It was a magic sword, and he seized it eagerly. Then he leaped upon the monster and struck her a



terrible blow in the neck. She fell beneath the stroke and died.

10. Then Beowulf, sword in hand, went to and fro in the chamber. He found the dead body of Grendel, and struck off the head with his magic sword. Taking it by the hair, he left the cave and plunged again into the water.



11. Soon he was swimming upwards, and ere long his head appeared above the water. Then arose a great shout of joy from the watchers on the bank. Some of them sprang into the lake and helped the hero to land. As he set foot on firm ground he gave thanks to God.

---

## 7. THE END OF THE STORY.

1. Once again there was great joy in Hrothgar's land. Sorrow and despair gave place to song and mirth. A great feast was prepared in honour of the hero, and the head

of Grendel was brought into the hall, so that all men might see it.

2. Then Beowulf told the story of how he had fought with the grim monster in the cave and had overcome her. Again Hrothgar gave him great praise and rich gifts.

3. When the feast was over, Beowulf, weary with his labours, lay down to rest. At dawn he felt a great longing to return to his own land. So he and his men made ready for the homeward voyage.

4. Then Beowulf went to the king to bid him farewell. Hrothgar, who was now old and gray-headed, gave the hero twelve costly gifts, and thanked him again and again in noble words. Then he threw his arms round the hero's neck and kissed him, while tears rained down his cheeks. Great was his sorrow at the leave-taking, for he loved Beowulf as his own son.

5. Laden with rich gifts, the hero and his men rode to the seashore where the ship lay. The coast-guard spied them, and riding up to Beowulf, bade him farewell with words of good cheer. Beowulf thanked him and gave him a splendid gift.

6. The warriors now went on board their ship and pushed off. The sail was hoisted, and as it swelled out in the breeze, the ship sped over the waves and threw the foam high from her prow. On and on she sailed, and soon Beowulf saw the well-known headlands of his own country. Ere long his ship ran aground. He had reached home once more.

7. The watchman on the shore had strained his eyes over the waters for many weeks, looking for the return of Beowulf and his companions. As soon as he saw their sail afar off, he hurried to the beach with joy, and helped the crew to come ashore.

8. The rich gifts with which the bark was laden were carried to the king's castle, and meanwhile the news of Beowulf's return became known to all his friends. A great feast was spread, and the hall was crowded with warriors, eager to see the hero who had won such renown.

9. The king bade Beowulf welcome, thanked God for



his safe return, and begged him to tell all that had befallen him. Then the hero told the whole story of how he had wounded Grendel unto death and slain the monster's mother in the cave beneath the lake.

10. So ends the first part of the story of Beowulf. In after times he became king of his people, and reigned in peace and honour for many years. Then a dragon who had been robbed of his treasure wasted the land with fire. Once more Beowulf donned his armour and set out to fight his fierce foe.

11. Alas! The dragon bit the hero in the neck, and though Beowulf slew him, he himself was sore wounded. Soon he knew that he must die. Ere he drew his last breath, he bade his friends burn his body on the cliff overlooking the sea, and raise a high mound over his ashes.

12. "In time to come," said he, "when my folk are driving their ships over the foam, they shall lift their eyes and see my mound high on yonder rocky headland. Then they will remember me and call to mind the deeds which I did in the brave days of old."





**The Minstrel.**

*(From the picture by Walter Paget. Specially painted for this book.)*

## 8. THE MUSIC OF WORDS.—I.

1. Now let us talk a little about the way in which the minstrels used to compose their songs. Before a potter can make a jug or a basin, he must have a supply of clay; and before a man can make a carpet, he must have many long threads to weave together. Before a minstrel can tell a story, he must have words at his command.

2. You already know a large number of words. In years to come, when you read many books, you will learn many more words. Think of the words which you already know. Some of them are sweet and beautiful, and fall off the tongue smoothly. Others are hard and rough, and are not easy to say.

3. Read the following lines:—

“ ‘ Home they brought her warrior dead ;  
She nor swooned nor uttered cry ;  
All her maidens watching, said,  
‘ She must weep, or she will die.’ ”

I think you will say that the words of this little verse are very sweet, and that they are put together in such a way that they seem to sing to us.

4. Some men and women are very skilful in choosing sweet words and putting them together so as to please our ears and make us feel and think. If their work is very good, and if they make us feel deeply, or think of noble things, we call them poets, and we say that they write poetry. The minstrels of old were not only poets, but makers of music as well.

5. Read the little verse again. If you were telling a friend about the poor lady, you would not speak as the poet does. You would perhaps say, "Her husband was a soldier, and they brought him home dead. When she saw his body, she neither fainted nor cried. The maids who were watching her said, 'We must do something to make her weep, or she will die.'"

6. Now, when you read these words, you will perhaps say, "Oh, this is just everyday talk. There is neither beauty nor music in it. I could not make up the verse, but I could say that." Quite right. When we put words together in an everyday, straightforward way, we are speaking or writing what is called *prose*, and prose is very different from poetry.





**Sons of the Brave.**

*(From the painting by Phil Morris, A.R.A., in the Leeds City Gallery.)*



7. I once read of a Frenchman who was ignorant, but wished to learn. He went to a teacher, and one of the first things he learned was that everyday talk is called prose. The Frenchman was delighted. "How clever I am!" he said. "All my life I have been talking prose without knowing it!"

8. Most of the books which people now read are written in prose, but the oldest books of all were written in poetry. The story of Ulysses was told in poetry, and so were the adventures of Beowulf.

9. You can easily understand why poetry came before prose. The minstrels wished to stir men's minds and hearts, so they chose their words with great care. As they sang their stories to the harp, the words had to be put together in such a way that they would run smoothly and go with the music. It is also easier to remember poetry than prose.



## 9. THE MUSIC OF WORDS.—II.

1. When you sing a song in school your teacher beats time for you. You follow the beat, and thus you all keep together and put the stress on the right notes. A song must be sung both in time and in tune if it is to give pleasure.

2. When soldiers march, the band goes before them playing a tune, and the drum-major swings his staff in order that the bandsmen may keep time. You can see a drum-major in the picture on page 32.

3. Now we can also beat time to poetry.

A-round | the fire | one win | try night, |  
 The fá | mer's ró | sy chíl | dren sát ; |  
 The fá | got lént | its blá | zing' light, |  
 And jókes | went róund | and cáre | less chá. |

4. You see that I have drawn upright lines so as to break each line of the verse into four parts. All that is printed between any two of these upright lines we will call a *foot*.

5. In the verse which you have just read there are two beats in each foot, an up beat and a down beat. The up beat is the weak

beat, the down beat is the strong beat. We put stress on that word or part of a word which goes with the down beat.

6. You must not expect every verse to be built up in this way. If all verses had the strong beats in the same place we should soon tire of them. Just as a man can make carpets of different patterns by weaving the threads differently, so a poet can make verses of different patterns by arranging the strong and weak beats differently.

7. Here is a verse of a different pattern from that which you have just read,—

Sée the | kí-ten | ón the | wáll,  
 Spórt-ing | wíth the | léaves that | fáll—  
 Wíth-ered | léaves, one, | twó, and | thrée,  
 Fáll-ing | f́rom the | éld-er | tree,  
 Thróugh the | cálm and | f́rost-y | áir  
 Óf the | mórn-ing, | bríght and | fáir.

8. When you read the poetry in this book, try to find out how many feet each line has, and where the strong beat comes in each foot. You will soon learn to do this for yourself, and it will help you to enjoy the poetry better.

9. Now look carefully at the verse about the farmer's rosy children. Notice the last word in the first line and the last word in the third line—*night, light*. These words have almost the same sound. Four out of the five letters which make up the words are the same ; only the first letter is different. Words which have much the same sound but are different words are said to rhyme. The words *night, bright, sight, right*, and so on, all rhyme.

10. In much of our English poetry we find rhymes. Sometimes each pair of lines ends with a rhyme, as in the verse about the kitten. Sometimes every other line ends with a rhyme, as in the verse about the farmer's children. Most people like rhymes, because they please the ear and seem to give more music to the verse.

11. You must not suppose that there is no poetry without rhymes. Some of the best poetry ever written has no rhymes at all. Rhyme is like the frill of a frock—it sets off the frock ; but many very beautiful frocks have no frills at all.

12. The verses in which the minstrels told



the stories of Beowulf have no rhymes. Each line of their poetry is divided into two parts, and in both the first and the second half of the line the stress is laid upon one or more words which *begin* with the same sound.

13. Here is a line from Beowulf turned into the English which you and I speak,—

The **F**oamy-necked **F**loated | **F**orth o'er the water.

You notice two words beginning with the sound of **F** in the first half of the line, and one in the second half. The old English poets wrote all their poetry in this way. For hundreds of years they did not use the rhymes which give you and me so much pleasure.

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## 10. THE KITTEN AT PLAY.

1. See the kitten on the wall,  
Sporting with the leaves that fall—  
Withered leaves, one, two, and three,  
Falling from the elder tree,  
Through the calm and frosty air  
Of the morning, bright and fair.

2. See the kitten how she starts,  
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts.  
With a tiger-leap half-way  
Now she meets her coming prey ;  
Lets it go as fast, and then  
Has it in her power again.
  
3. Now she works with three and four,  
Like an Indian conjurer ;  
Quick as he in feats of art,  
Gracefully she plays her part.  
Yet were gazing thousands there,  
What would little Tabby care ?

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



## II. HOW THE OLD BOOKS WERE WRITTEN.

1. Study the picture on the next page very carefully. It shows you a room in a great building something like a church. It is the home of a number of men who have agreed to live together and give all their time and thought to the service of God.

2. These men are called monks. More than a thousand years ago there were many monks' houses in England. Some of them were very noble buildings, and we may see the ruins of them even to-day. I daresay that not far from your town or village there is a ruined monks' house still to be seen. I hope that some day you will visit it.

3. A thousand years ago the only persons who could read and write were monks and other churchmen. Some of them knew all the learning of their own and past ages. Some were skilful builders and carvers. Others could draw and paint and make music. Others, again, were very good farmers, and some were doctors.



IN THE WRITER'S ROOM.  
*(From an old picture.)*



4. The monks were not only the friends of learning, but the friends of the poor. They gave food and lodging to the hungry and homeless, and tended the sick. They taught the people how to get good crops from the land, and how to build better houses.

5. Look at the picture again. You see a monk hard at work copying a book. All the books in those days were written by hand, on sheepskin or calfskin. Sometimes a book took years to make.



6. From this you will understand that books cost a great deal of money, and that only rich people could afford to buy them. Nowadays we have hundreds of books on our shelves, but in those early times a man thought that he had a fine library if there were a dozen books in his house.

7. Some of the monks wrote a very good hand, and made the books easy to read.

Sometimes they made them beautiful as well. Often they drew a border of fruit and leaves round each page, and made the first word of a chapter very large and filled it with gold or gay colours. Turn to page 52, and there

you will see a page of one of these old books.



8. Think of all the love and labour which these monks put into their work! They spared no pains, and they strove to make their books perfect. They were not working for money or for man's praise; they were working for the glory of God.

9. In Book I. you were told that the old writings on reed-paper and on sheepskin were in the form of a roll. The writings of the monks, however, were on *leaves* of sheepskin, which were bound together in the form of a book.

10. Why did men give up the roll? A roll is clumsy to use, because it needs both hands to keep it open. If the book is long the roll must be long too. This means that it becomes big and awkward.

11. It was the Christians who first gave up the roll. They wished to have the Bible in one book, so that they could easily turn to all parts of it. A huge roll would be needed to contain the whole Bible.

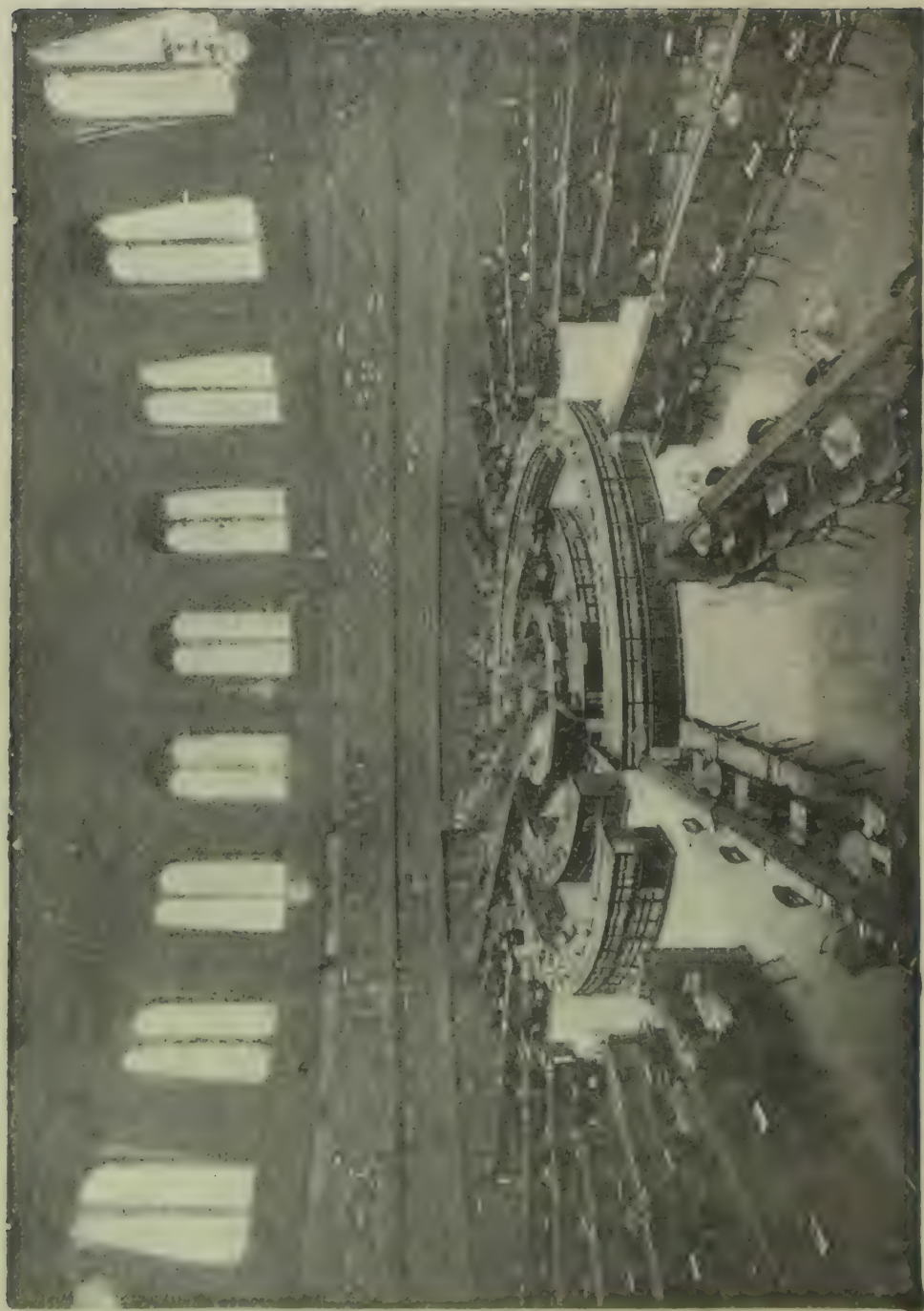
12. You know that people then wrote notes and wills on several tablets fastened together. The Christians said to themselves, "Why not have the Bible written on leaves which can be fastened together like the leaves of a tablet?" When this was done the book took its present form.

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## 12. THE VOWELS.

We are very little creatures,  
All of different voice and features ;  
One of us in *glass* is set,  
One of us you'll find in *jet*.  
T'other you may see in *tin*,  
And the fourth a *box* within.  
If the fifth you should pursue,  
It can never fly from *you*.

JONATHAN SWIFT.



THE READING ROOM OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



### 13. THE DURHAM BOOK.—I.

1. I am sure you would like to see some of the grand old books which the monks made with such loving care. If you go to the British Museum, which contains the greatest of our libraries, you can still see one of the most famous of these books. It is called the Durham Book.

2. Turn to Book III., "Highroads of History," and on page 24 you will find several pictures of Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland. In the middle of the page there is a view of the ruins of an old abbey, which still stands on the island. The view was taken from what is called St. Cuthbert's cell.

3. Let me tell you something about St. Cuthbert, for the Durham Book was made in his honour. He was a little Scottish boy, and his father and mother were Christians. Monks from the island of Iona had turned many of the Scottish people from their old heathen ways to the worship of the one true God. One of these monks was named Aidan, and he was well known to the Scottish people.

4. At this time the heathen English from across the North Sea were winning South Britain for themselves. They had already won much of the north, and one of their kings wished his people to become Christians. So he asked the monks of Iona to send him one of their number. They sent Aidan to help him.

5. Aidan set up a monks' house on Holy Island, and went to and fro amongst the people preaching and teaching. He worked and prayed without ceasing, and in time many of the Northern English became Christians.

6. Now when Cuthbert was a boy he herded sheep on the hills of South Scotland. One day as he sat watching his sheep he dreamed that he saw Aidan being carried up to heaven by angels.\* He told his dream to his friends, and a few days later they heard the sad news that Aidan was really dead.

7. "God has visited me in a dream," said the boy. "He means me to serve Him as a monk." So he went to the nearest monks' house, in order that he might learn to be a preacher

\* See page 49.

and teacher. When he entered the house the chief monk said, "Behold a servant of God!"

8. Cuthbert gave all his life and thought to the work of spreading the gospel, and wherever he went to preach and teach the people loved him. His face was so kind, his voice was so sweet, and his manners were so gentle, that men gladly listened to him and believed his teaching. About the year 660 he became head of the abbey on Holy Island.

9. Here he worked and prayed and wore himself out in striving to turn the heathen English to Christ. He ate little, and he fasted much and punished himself for his sins. At last he thought that he would be a better man if he left the abbey and lived by himself.

10. Then he went to a rocky little islet not far away, where he lived for nine years in a rude stone house, so small that he could scarcely stand upright within it. There was only one window in the



house, and from this he could see nothing but the sky. Men began to think of him as a saint, and they said that God had given him power to heal the sick, the lame, and the blind.

11. At length a large number of churchmen went to his cell and begged him to become Bishop of York. For a long time he refused, but at last he yielded. After two years' work at York he felt that his death was nigh, so he went back to his cell on the lonely islet and there died.

12. As his breath floated away, a monk took a torch in each hand and went up to the highest point of the island. He did this in order to give notice to his friends on the mainland that Cuthbert was dead. Then the body was carried to Holy

Island, and was buried in the abbey with great pomp. Men came from far and near to pray at his tomb, and it is said that many wonderful cures were wrought there.







**The Boyhood of St. Cuthbert.**

*(From the picture by George Wetherbee, R.I. Copyright of the painter.)*



DURHAM CATHEDRAL AS IT IS TO-DAY.

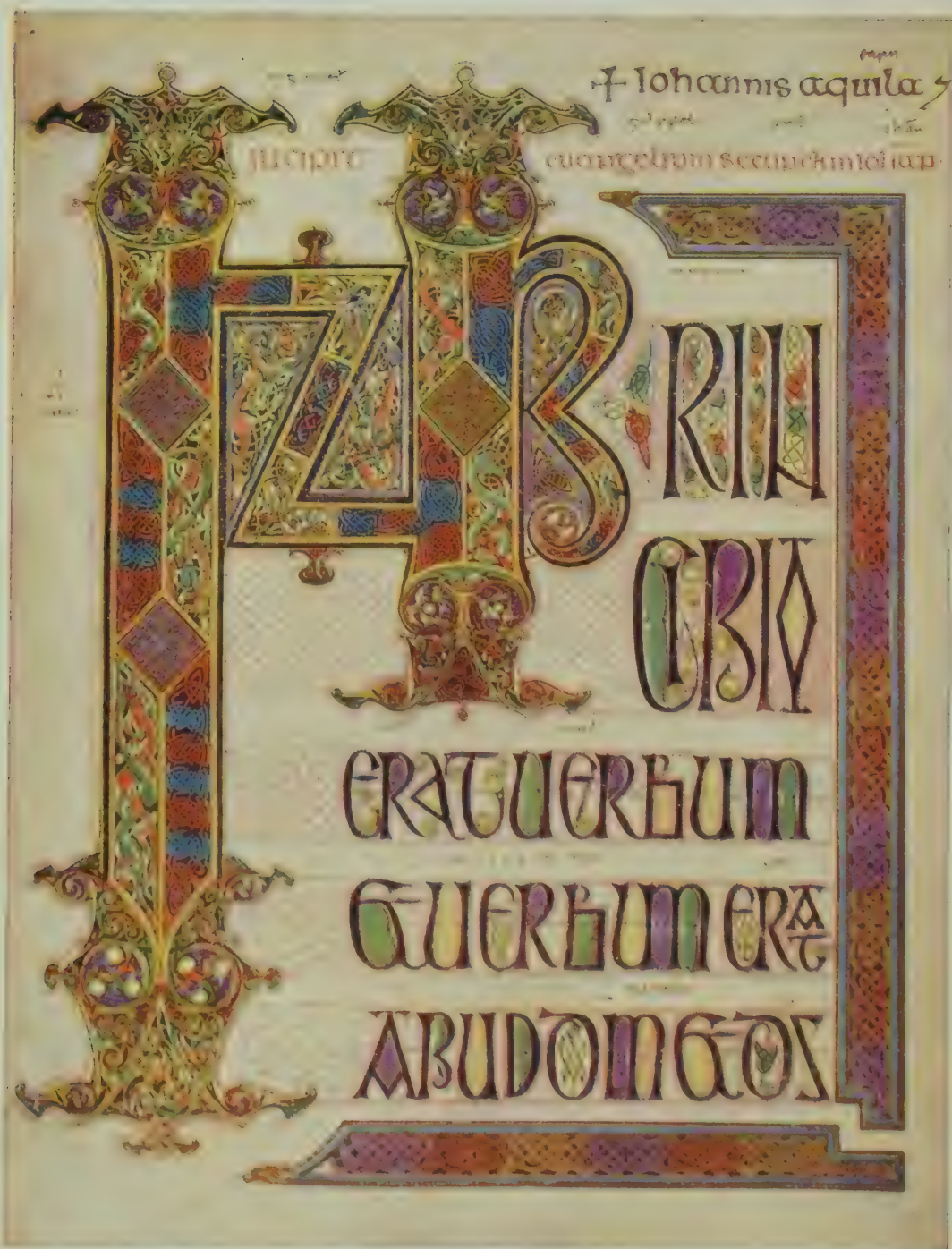
#### 14. THE DURHAM BOOK.—II.

1. Some years after Cuthbert's death the Danes came sweeping across the North Sea in their long ships. There were many rich and beautiful things in the abbey on Holy Island, and they broke into it and robbed and burnt without mercy. They did not, however, touch the richest thing of all—the body of Cuthbert.

2. More than eighty years passed away, and then the Danes made another raid. This time the monks fled, and they took with them Cuthbert's body in a wooden coffin. They put it on board a ship, but a storm drove the vessel back, and the monks wandered over North England and South Scotland, taking the coffin with them. For seven years they carried it to and fro, and it is said that a church or chapel was afterwards set up at every place where the saint's body rested.

3. At length the Christian king of the Danes gave the monks a piece of land near Durham on which to build a church. In this church Cuthbert's body was buried for a hundred years. It was then taken to Ripon, and after-





A Page of the Durham Book.

(This glorious old book was made more than one thousand two hundred years ago.)



wards to Holy Island, but found a last resting-place on the spot where Durham Cathedral now stands.

4. In memory of St. Cuthbert the monks of Holy Island made the noble book which we call the Durham Book. It is a perfect piece of work, and is filled with beautiful designs in gold and colours. No one knows, and no one will ever know, the names of the monks who worked so skilfully and lovingly at it.

5. They have been dead for more than twelve hundred years, but their beautiful book still speaks to us, and teaches us that the best work in this world is never done for money or for fame.

6. The monks of Holy Island were very proud of this book. In later days one of their bishops had it bound in a splendid binding of gold and studded with gems. For many years it was the greatest treasure of the abbey.


7. The book is written in Latin, which, as you know, was the tongue which the monks used in the services of the church. More than two hundred years after Cuthbert's

death a monk turned the book into English, and wrote the English words under the Latin words in a very fine and small handwriting.

8. On page 52 you will see a page of this wonderful book. I want you to notice the border, which consists of strands woven together. You will see the same kind of pattern on the cover of the book which you are now reading.

9. Many of the very old stone crosses which are still found in Ireland and in parts of Scotland have these woven strands carved upon them. We also see the same pattern in very old plaids. What does it teach us?

10. The artists of old looked about for a design to fill in the borders of their books, and they found it in the baskets which they used, or in the roughly woven clothing which they wore. They took their patterns from the common things about them, and thus the designs which we see in the old books tell us much about the life of the people in early days.



## 15. IN THE WRITERS' ROOM.

*(A monk pauses at his work of copying one of the Gospels, and looks out of the window.)*

“How sweet the air is ! How fair the scene !  
I wish I had as lovely a green  
To paint my landscapes and my leaves !  
How the swallows twitter under the eaves !  
There, now, there is one in her nest ;  
I can just catch a glimpse of her head and  
breast,  
And will sketch her thus in her quiet nook,  
For the margin of my Gospel book.”

LONGFELLOW.

## 16. THE FIRST GREAT ENGLISH SONG.

1. To-day we will visit the ruins of one of the oldest monks' houses in all England. We make our way to the famous Yorkshire town of Whitby. It stands on the sea-coast, and on the west side of a little river which broadens out to form a harbour as it enters the sea.

2. We cross the harbour by a bridge, and



**HILDA AND THE SEA-GULLS.**

An old story tells us that the sea-gulls flying in from the sea knew how kind and good Hilda was to the poor, and bowed themselves at her feet.

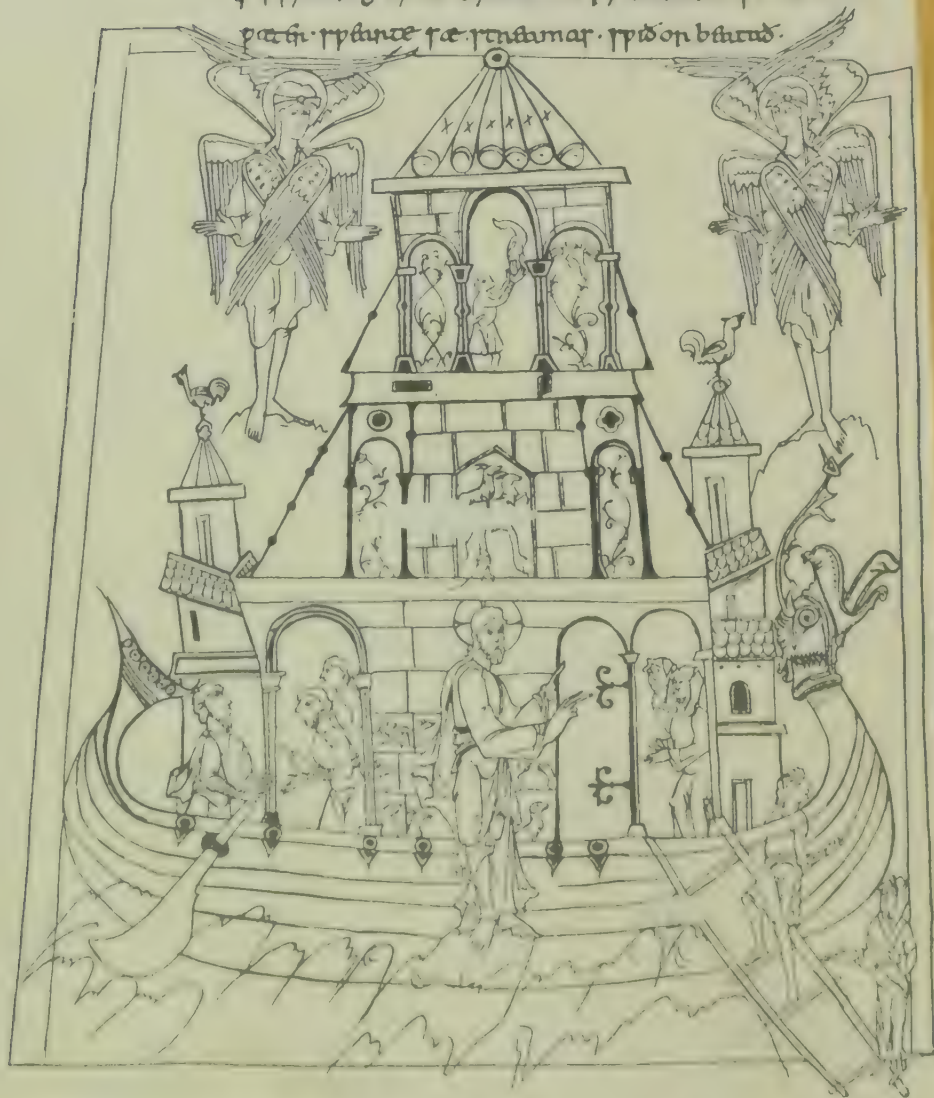


turning to the right, find ourselves climbing one hundred and ninety-nine steps, which bring us up to a bare, treeless headland, two hundred feet above the level of the sea. From this headland we look out over the wild waves across which the English and Danes sailed in their long-ships when they came to conquer Britain and make it their own.

3. On the headland we see the ruins of Whitby Abbey. It is roofless, and in many places the walls are broken down, but enough remains to show us what a noble building it once was. This ruined abbey was built about eight hundred years ago, but long before its stately walls arose there was a house for monks and nuns on the spot.

4. In your history book you read how Augustine and his forty monks came to England to turn the English from their old heathen ways to the worship of the true God. One of the monks preached in Yorkshire, and many of the people who heard him became Christians. Amongst them was Hilda, the daughter of the king who then ruled over Yorkshire.

Noe freme. fpa hime ne rignod helic. hyrde þam hal  
 gan. hit þon cynnige ongan. ofort lice. þæt hoƿ pƿican  
 micle mæte ahte. magum fæge. þæt æt þreaflic þing  
 þæt þoum to færo. fæde fæte. hie ne nohƿon þæt. ge  
 fæh þa ymb finka fonn. fæn fæte mæod. ge þon  
 hura mæte. geano hluƿgan. in ðan futan. fæðan  
 lute. gefætnod fæð fode. færnof. þy felftan.  
 fæt fynnrog cynn. Symle bið þy hændra. þelic hneoh  
 fæte. fæfne fæ fæðmar. fæðon bæroð.



PART OF THE FIRST GREAT ENGLISH SONG.  
 (From an old book in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.)

5. When Hilda became a Christian she left her father's palace, and built a large house and church on the headland where we now stand. Then she gathered together a number of men and women who were ready to give up the world and live together in her house, so that they might spend their days in praising God and in helping the poor and needy.

6. There were not only monks and nuns in Hilda's great house, but servants as well. These servants worked in the house, or in the fields, or looked after the cattle. One of the cowherds was named Cædmon. He was a simple, pious man, and very shy.

7. You know that ~~which~~ the day's work ~~was done~~ it was the custom of the English ~~to assemble themselves for the evening meal, and~~ to amuse themselves with song and story. ~~Whenever a wandering minstrel or gleeman~~ ~~would appear, and would sing and play for~~ ~~the company.~~ When no gleeman was present, the harp was passed from hand to hand, and each person had to sing or play for his fellows.

8. When Cædmon saw the harp coming to-

wards him, he used to slip out of the hall and go to the stable where he slept. He was a kindly man, and he wished to give pleasure to his companions, but he knew no songs and no stories, and he shrank from telling his friends how ignorant he was.

9. One night, when he had slipped away from the feast and had gone to his stable, he fell asleep and dreamed. In his dream he heard the voice of God saying, "Cædmon, sing Me something." "I know not how to sing," replied the man, "and for this cause left I the feast." "Yet," said the voice, "you must sing to Me." "What shall I sing?" asked Cædmon. "Sing," said the voice, "about the beginning of the world, and tell the story of how God made it."

10. Then Cædmon began to sing. Beautiful thoughts crowded into his mind, and noble words fell from his lips. He had composed the first great English song!

11. When he awoke he remembered the verses which he had sung in his dream. This seemed so wonderful to him that he told the steward of the household about it. At once the steward led Cædmon to Hilda, and she





The East Cliff at Whitby, showing the ruins of the Abbey.  
From the picture by W. Egerton Hine. By permission of Sutton Palmer, Esq.

called together the monks. They listened to the cowherd's story and were amazed. They cried out that God had touched the lips of this poor ignorant man and had made him a poet.



12. Hilda and the monks then turned parts of the Bible into English for him, and bade him make more poetry. This he did, and then Hilda took him into the house as a monk. He was taught to read the Bible, and every day he turned the Bible stories into such beautiful verses that very soon his teachers became his hearers.

13. How long Caedmon lived in Hilda's house after this we do not know. He died after a short illness just as the monks came together to sing the psalms at midnight.

14. On page 58 you will see a page of an old book in which Caedmon's poems were written. You cannot read it, because the English of Caedmon's day was very different from that which we now speak. Some of his poems have been turned into our English. When you

are older I hope you will read them. You will find them very sweet and tender.

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## 17. THE POET'S SONG.

1. The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
    He passed by the town and out of the street;  
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,  
    And waves of shadow went over the wheat,  
And he sat him down in a lonely place,  
    And chanted a melody loud and sweet,  
That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,  
    And the lark drop down at his feet.
  
2. The swallow stopped as he hunted the fly,  
    The snake slipped under a spray,  
The wild hawk stood with the down on his  
    beak,  
And stared with his foot on the prey;  
And the nightingale thought, "I have sung  
    many songs,  
But never a one so gay,  
For he sings of what the world will be  
    When the years have died away."

LORD TENNYSON.

## 18. THE MONK OF JARROW.

1. Now let me tell you about another famous writer. His name was Bede, and he was born about eight years before the death of Cadmon. He lost his parents when he was seven years of age, but he found a new father in the abbot of Norwich.

2. The abbot was a good and active man, who loved learning and all beautiful things. When Bede was ten years of age the abbot built a splendid monks' house at Jarrow, near the mouth of the Tyne. Workmen were brought from France, and they painted scenes from the Bible on the walls of the church, and filled the windows with stained glass.

3. Little Bede loved to look at these pictures, and he soon made up his mind that he would be a monk and give his life to the worship and glory of God. To the day of his death he lived in the monks' house at Jarrow.





4. The abbot also sent to France for books, and soon he had the best library in all England. Then he sent to Rome for a learned man to come and teach the monks. There was no one in the house who learned so eagerly and so well as Bede.

5. Now you must remember that at this time all the services of the Church were said and sung in Latin—that is, the tongue spoken by the Romans of old. Nearly all the books were written in Latin too. There were very few English books. Even the Bible had not been turned into English.

6. Before Bede was twenty he became a monk, and showed himself to be a very good, kind, and pious man. He studied the Bible day and night, and he spent all his time in learning, teaching, or writing.

7. Most of his books were written in Latin, and amongst them was a history of the English Church. In this history Bede tells the story of how Cædmon sang the first great English song.

8. In course of time Bede became famous as a teacher, and monks flocked to him from all parts of the country. They loved to listen

to his teaching, for he knew all the learning of the time. He was also a singer, and could compose songs on the spur of the moment.

9. Towards the end of his life he gave much of his time to turning parts of the Bible into English. He became very ill, but he would not give up this work. The hand of death was upon him, and he knew that he must soon die. He wished, however, to finish turning the Gospel of St. John into English before he was called away.

10. Hour by hour he sat at his work, while a boy by his side wrote down the words as they fell from his lips. At last he became so faint and feeble that the boy said, "Dearest master, there is only one chapter left, but thou art too weary to finish it."

11. "No, no," said Bede. "It must be done. Take thy pen and write quickly." So he worked on until eventide. Then the boy said, "There is only one sentence more." Bede roused himself and turned the sentence into English. "It is finished," cried the boy joyfully. "Thou hast spoken truly," said Bede: "it is finished!"

12. Then he bade his friends place him so that he could look on the spot where he was wont to kneel in prayer. They laid him on the floor of his cell, and he began to chant, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." When he reached the last word his breath failed him, and he died.

13. Bede did a great work for England. He taught men to love learning, and he gave them parts of the Bible in English. Dark days set in after his death, but when they had passed away his books were once more read, and men began to write not only in Latin, but in their mother tongue.

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## 19. THE MOTHER'S BOOK.

1. "Come here, my boys,"  
the lady said,  
Seated in royal chair.  
Four lads came, each  
with flaxen head,  
And faces fresh and fair.



2. " See here, my children, come and look !  
See tales of many a saint,  
Fair written in this noble book,  
And decked with pictures quaint.
3. " The boy who first shall read the scroll  
Unaided and alone,  
And all its precious stores unroll,  
Shall have it for his own."
4. Up spake the eldest of the four :  
" Some day the king I'll be ;  
So monkish pen and scholar's lore  
Need never trouble me."
5. The second brother then spake out :  
" I have my sword and bow ;  
How best to put the foe to rout  
Is all I wish to know."
6. Then answered gentle Ethelred :  
" I love a holy song,  
But letters weary sore my head,  
Study is all too long."



7. Then Alfred spake with eager look,  
New light shone in his eyes :  
“ Pray lend to me this wondrous book,  
And I will win the prize.”

\* \* \* \*

8. Soon at his mother's side he stood,  
And every line and verse,  
Each holy life and maxim good,  
Did he by heart rehearse.

9. And thus the book was twice his own,  
His own its precious store,  
And in the camp and on the throne  
He learned to love its lore.

10. Yet still a better boon he earned,  
And we may gain it too ;  
This was what “ England's Darling ”  
learned—  
To make “ I will ! ” “ I do ! ”

C. M. YONGE. (*Adapted.*)



## 20. “ENGLAND’S DARLING.”

1. Prince Alfred, about whom you have just read, grew up to be one of the greatest and best of all our kings. You will read his story in your history book, so I need not tell it to you now.

2. You will read how the Danes carried fire and sword through his land and beat the English in many fierce battles. From his youth up Alfred had to fight hard against his fierce foes. They slew his brother Ethelred, and then he became king, but only in name. The Danes were masters of his kingdom.

3. At length he was able to lead a strong army against his foes, and to overthrow them.

Then his land had rest, but it was in a pitiful plight. The towns were in ruins, the abbeys were burnt down, the fields lay waste, and there was scarcely a scholar in the whole land. Alfred set himself to build up his kingdom anew, and before he died it was once more rich and powerful.





**Alfred and his Mother.**

*(From an unfinished painting by Alfred Stevens in the Tate Gallery )*

4. All his life he loved learning, and we are told that every day he gave some of his time either to reading books himself or to hearing them read aloud by others. When the Danes were overcome, his first care was to set up schools, and to urge his nobles to have their sons taught. He brought over learned men from France to be the masters of these schools.

5. Alfred soon saw that there could never be much learning in the land while his people had no books to read in their own tongue. He therefore learnt Latin, and gave much of his time to turning Latin books into English.

6. One of the many books which he turned into English in this way was Bede’s “History of the English Church,” another was the Psalms of David, and a third was a Latin geography and history. He also turned into English some of the fables written by a Greek slave named Æsop. Later on I shall tell you some of these fables in verse.

7. Not only did Alfred give his people books in English, but he ordered a History of England to be made. Long before his



time the monks used to write down in Latin the chief events which happened year by year.

8. Alfred had a history made out of these old books, and brought the story down to his own time. Then the book was chained to a desk in the chief church of his kingdom, and for the next two hundred and fifty years the history was kept up-to-date. It is from Bede’s History and from this book that we learn the story of early times in our own country.

9. Alfred was not only a lover of books, but a great ruler and lawgiver as well. He often said that he wished to be remembered for his good works by those who should come after him. He is still remembered as one who strove to leave the world better than he found it.

10. Long before he died Englishmen knew that he lived only for the good of his people, and they loved him as few rulers have ever been loved. They called him “England’s Darling,” and we in our day speak of him as Alfred the Great.



**The Magician.**

*(From the picture by Sir W. Fettes Douglas, P.R.S.A., in the Scottish National Gallery.)*

## 21. THE STATUE AT ROME.—I.

1. After the death of good King Alfred a hard, bitter time set in for England. Songs were still made by the minstrels, and books were still written by the monks, but there was so much fighting to be done that men had little time to give to learning. A great change for the better took place with the coming of the Normans.

2. You will read in your history book the story of how these strong and powerful men conquered the land. They despised the English because they were a rough and unlearned people. All men who lived about the court and ruled the country spoke French, which was the tongue of Normandy.

3. The coming of the Normans brought much hardship to the English, but it brought some good as well. Many churchmen came over from Normandy, and many new monks' houses were built. These churchmen



were the most learned men of the time, and they loved books. Every monks' house had its library and its writers' room, in which old books were copied and new books were written.

4. You already know that Latin was used in the services of the church, and that the churchmen were the only men who could read and write. They wrote their books in Latin, so that they could be read by churchmen all over Europe. Scarcely any books were written in English for many years after the Norman conquest.

5. I have just been reading a book that was written in Latin by a monk about fifty years after the Normans overcame the English at the battle of Hastings. This monk was named William, and he lived in the monks' house at Malmesbury, in Wiltshire. For this reason he is known as William of Malmesbury. He was a learned man, and he loved books so much that he was placed in charge of the library.

6. William wrote several books, and the best known of them is a history of England from the coming of the English to the days of Henry the First, who was a lover of learning like good



King Alfred. This book is very interesting, not only for its history, but for the many wonderful stories which it contains. Some of these are fairy tales about wizards and demons and underground treasures, and so forth.

7. Let me tell you the most wonderful tale in this old book. Once upon a time there was a man named Gerbert, who went to Spain to learn magic. The Moors were the masters of Spain at this time, and there were many magicians amongst them. Gerbert lived in the house of a famous magician, who taught him magic and lent him books.

8. There was one book, however, which the old Moor would not lend him, because it told men how to raise up evil spirits to do their bidding. So much did the Moor value this book that he slept with it under his pillow. Gerbert begged hard to be allowed to read the book ; but his master would not listen to him. So one night when the old magician was asleep Gerbert crept into his room, stole the book from under his pillow, and fled.

9. As soon as the Moor awoke he rushed after the thief. Gerbert was crossing a bridge,

when he saw the Moor afar off. At once he got under the bridge, and clinging to a beam, hung down over the water. The magician could not find him, and had to return home much grieved at the loss of his precious book.



10. Then Gerbert made his way to the seashore. There he read the book, and learnt how to call up evil spirits who would obey him. He told them to carry him across the sea to Gaul, and they did so.

11. In Gaul, Gerbert taught in the schools and did many wonderful deeds. He also made a clock, and an organ worked by steam. These things do not seem very wonderful to us, but they were marvels to the people of those days.

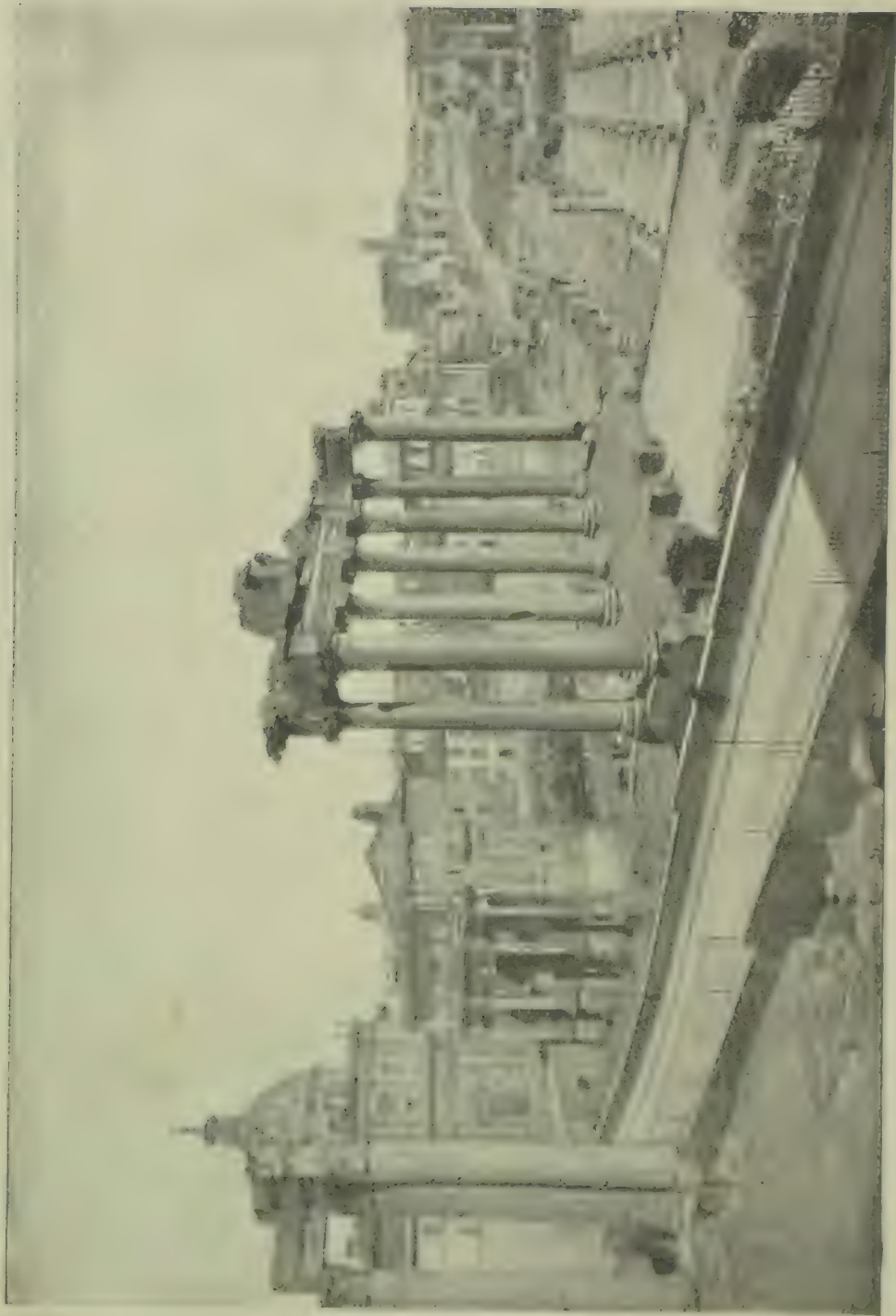
12. By means of magic he also found out places in which treasures had been hidden. He dug up these treasures, and was so greedy that he wished for more. We shall soon learn how he was punished for his greed.

## 22. THE STATUE AT ROME.—II.

1. Near Rome at this time there was a ruined statue of brass, with one arm stretched out and the forefinger pointing to the ground. On its head were written these words: "Strike here." In earlier days men thought that there was hidden treasure in the head of the statue. So they broke it open with blows of a hatchet, only to find that it was empty.

2. Gerbert heard of this statue, and went to Rome to see it. He knew by his magic that there was hidden treasure near at hand, and that men had struck at the wrong place to find it. He thought for a long time over the matter, and at last found the treasure, only to lose it.

3. This is what he did. He watched the shadow of the forefinger from early morning until noon, and saw it creeping nearer and nearer to the statue as the sun rose higher and higher in the sky. At noon, when the sun was at its highest point, he marked the place where the shadow of the forefinger fell.



RUINS OF ANCIENT ROME.



He drove a post into the ground at this spot, and went home to wait for nightfall.

4. When all was dark and silent he called his servant, and bade him light a lantern and go with him to the statue. Then Gerbert called upon his evil spirits to open the earth. They did so, and he and his servant went down into the ground.

5. They saw before them the door of a grand palace. When they entered it they were much surprised to see that it was made of gold. The walls, the roof, the pillars, the floor, and everything within the palace were of pure gold.

6. In the outer hall were golden figures of soldiers playing with golden dice. In the inner chamber were golden figures of a king and queen seated at a gold table, with golden plates and golden cups before them. Golden figures of servants stood by as if in waiting.

7. But what struck Gerbert and his companion most was a gem hanging from the roof.



Though it seemed small to them, it sent forth a flood of light, and the whole place was as bright as day. In a corner of the room was the golden figure of a boy holding a bent bow with an arrow drawn to his head.

8. Everywhere around him Gerbert saw rich and rare things, and because he was a greedy man he wished to have them as his own. When, however, he tried to touch anything, all the figures came to life and rushed forward to prevent him. Gerbert was frightened, and drew back.

9. His servant, however, snatched a knife from a table. It was small, but was very beautiful, and the man thought that amidst the crowd of precious things it would not be missed. He was mistaken, for no sooner had his fingers touched the prize than all the figures started up with a loud noise.

10. In an instant the boy in the corner let fly his arrow at the gem hanging from the roof, and the whole place became dark. The servant, however, still had his lantern, and by its light he and his master were able to see. Gerbert feared that some great harm

would overtake them if they tried to take the knife away, so he bade his servant throw it back on to the table.

11. When this was done the figures showed no signs of life, and the gem hanging from the roof became bright again. Gerbert and his servant were very unwilling to leave all the beautiful and precious things behind them, but they were forced to do so. At last they left the palace, and by the light of the lantern reached the foot of the statue. Then the earth closed, and the underground treasure-house was hidden from men's eyes for ever.

12. This story William of Malmesbury sets down in his history book. It teaches us that in the days of the Norman kings even learned men believed in magic, and that tales which you and I now laugh at were thought by them to be sober truth. In later lessons we shall read some of the other fairy tales which men believed to be true eight or nine hundred years ago.

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**The Road to Arthur's City, Camelot.**

*From the picture by George H. Boughton, R.A. By permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.*



## STORIES OF ARTHUR'S KNIGHTS.

### 23. HOW THE STORIES CAME TO US.

1. You already know that Beowulf was the great hero of the English people in their old home across the North Sea. When the English came to conquer this country they found that it was peopled by Britons. They slew many of these Britons and drove them into the mountains of the west.

2. Now the Britons had a great hero named Arthur. He fought nobly against the English, and kept them at bay for many long years. So powerful was he in war, and so good and wise in peace, that the minstrels told many wonderful stories about him. What Beowulf was to the English, Arthur was to the Britons.



3. In the first three lessons of "Highroads of History," Book II., I have told you the story of King Arthur. You read there that his fame spread all over the land, and that knights flocked to his court. The best and bravest of these knights were chosen by Arthur as his companions, and they sat with him at the Round Table.

4. The knights swore to be pure in heart and true in word and deed. They promised to be gentle and kind, and never to see a wrong act done without trying to set it right. Above all, they promised to fight to the death for all ladies in distress.

5. Stories of Arthur and his knights were sung by the minstrels for five or six hundred

years before they were set down in writing. So well known were these stories that a man was thought to be very ignorant if he did not know them. King Alfred could sing many of these songs, and he had them taught to his children.



6. The stories of Arthur and his knights were at first gathered together by a Welsh monk named Geoffrey of Monmouth, who was born about two hundred years after the death of Arthur. He tells us that he copied them from an old Welsh history book; but we know that he added much to them, not only from what he had heard as he went to and fro, but also from his own fancy.

7. When Geoffrey wrote his book the Normans were masters of England. Normans sat in all the high places. They were the chief land-owners and churchmen and judges, and their tongue was spoken and written by all who were rich and powerful. English was thought to be fit only for the poor and ignorant.

8. Geoffrey did not write his book either in English or in French, which was the tongue of the Normans, but in Latin, which was still written and spoken by learned men. Three hundred years after his death, a man named Sir Thomas Malory gathered all the stories of Arthur together, and wrote them down in an English book. In our own days Lord Tennyson has told these stories all over again in verse.

9. In the next few lessons I shall tell you some stories of Arthur's knights. Men have loved these stories for hundreds of years, and they will never be forgotten while the English tongue is spoken.

10. I shall tell you the first story as Lord Tennyson wrote it. When you are older you will read his verses for yourself. They are full of beauty, and they will give you much pleasure.

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## 24. THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

### A FABLE FROM ÆSOP.

[Fables are stories in which men and animals are made to act and speak so as to teach us worldly wisdom. See if you can discover for yourself the lesson which the following fable teaches.]

The grasshopper gay,  
Through the long summer day,  
Sang merrily, blithe, and free.  
When the summer had fled,  
She discovered with dread  
That no store for the winter had she.  
Not a morsel of food, a grub or a fly,  
For the cold hungry days had she ever put by.  
"I shall starve, I am sure," said she.



So she went to the ant, who lived over the way.

“Please lend me some wheat; don’t refuse me, I pray;

Your larder is full, I can see.

I’ll pay it all back—yes, more than you lend—  
If you’ll spare me some food, my careful old friend.

Oh, say that you will!” cried she.

But the wise old ant, with a frown, shook her head,

“‘Don’t borrow or lend,’ is my motto,” she said;

“I stick to it faithfully.

Pray, what were you doing when summer was here,

When the flies and the grubs were swarming,  
my dear?

*I was working as hard as could be.”*

“Oh, good Mrs. Ant, I sang all the day!”

“You sang,” cried the ant; “you sang, did you say?”

*Well, now you may dance!”* said she.

EDWARD SHIRLEY.

## 25. GARETH AND LYNETTE.—I.

1. In the days of good King Arthur there was a young prince named Gareth. His father was very old, so his mother ruled the kingdom.

2. Gareth was tall and brave, and longed to go out into the world in search of adventures. One day he went to his mother, and, kneeling by her chair, begged her to let him go to Arthur's court and become one of the king's knights.

3. The queen was very unwilling to part with her boy. "I am old and lonely," said she. "Hast thou no pity on my loneliness? Stay with me, my best son, for thou art yet more boy than man. Thou hast never known a finger-ache, and thou art far too young to suffer the perils and pains which knights must bear. Stay at home with me."



4. Gareth was much hurt that his mother should still think him a child. He pleaded

with her again and again, and at length she saw that she must give way.

5. So she said,—

“Prince, thou shalt go disguised to Arthur’s hall  
And hire thyself to serve for meats and drinks  
Among the scullions and the kitchen-knives,  
And those that hand the dish across the bar.  
Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any one.  
And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth and a day.”

6. The queen was very crafty, and she felt sure that Gareth was far too proud to serve Arthur in this humble way. Gareth, however, surprised her by saying that he would yield himself freely to her will. Even as a servant he would be able to see the king’s knights, and watch them as they tried to unhorse each other in the great courtyard.

7. Next morning Gareth called two of his father’s men and bade them go with him. All three disguised themselves as farm labourers, and rode southward towards the city of Camelot, where Arthur dwelt.

8. At length, far off, they saw the city half hidden in silver mist.



Sometimes they saw its spires and towers quite clearly ; then the mist enfolded the place, and it seemed to fade away from their sight. At this Gareth's companions were afraid, and one of them cried out, "Let us go no further, my lord ; it is a magic city, built by fairy kings. It is not a real city at all, but a dream."

9. Gareth laughed at their fears, and spurred his horse towards a wonderful gate that gleamed before them. His companions followed him, and as they stood gazing at it a wild strain of music pealed from within. Then an old man with a long white beard came out, and asked, "Who be ye, my sons?"

10. Gareth told him that they were tillers of the soil who had come to serve the king. The old man then left them, and the young prince and his servants led their horses through the gate, and rode along the streets of Camelot until they came to a great hall.

11. Here Arthur sat to right the wrongs of his people. Gareth listened to the deep tones of the king's voice as he did justice to all who came before him and sent his knights to help those who were in distress. At length





**Gareth and Lynette.**

*(From the picture by Rowland Wheelwright, R. B. A. Specially painted for this book.)*

he cried, "A boon, O King. Give me leave to serve among thy kitchen-knives for a year and a day, and do not ask my name."



12. The king glanced at him and said, "Thou seemest a goodly youth. Thou shalt have thy boon, and serve under Sir Kay, my steward." When he said this he left the judgment seat, and Gareth went his way to the king's kitchen.

## 26. GARETH AND LYNETTE.—II.

1. Now Sir Kay, the master of the kitchen, disliked Gareth from the moment that he saw him; but Lancelot, the bravest and best of Arthur's knights, took a fancy to him. Lancelot often spoke a kind word to Gareth, and this helped him to bear the hard life which was now about to begin.

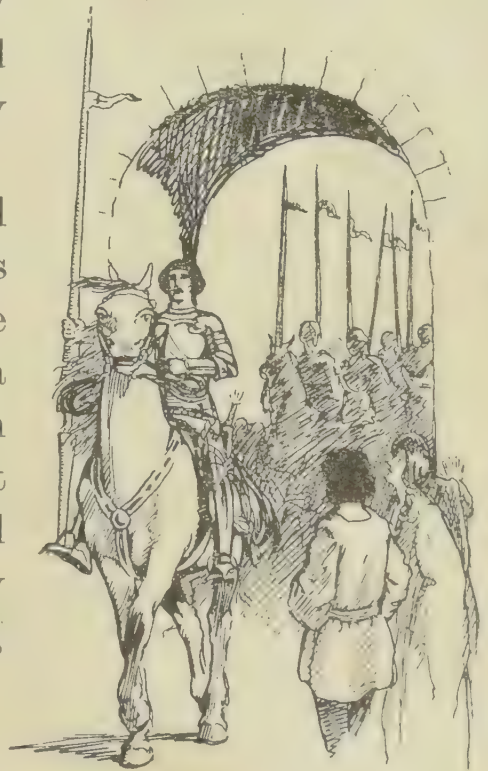
2. Sir Kay was rough and unkind to the young prince, and set him the most unpleasant of tasks. He made him turn the spit, draw the

water, and chop the wood. Gareth, however, did his work with a smile, and took pains to do all his tasks quickly and well.

3. Sometimes the kitchen-knaves would talk about the brave deeds of the king and his knights, and Gareth loved to listen to them. The knight whom they praised most was Lancelot.

4. Sometimes the servants would use foul words and talk of disgraceful things. Then Gareth would whistle loudly, and thus shut his ears to their base talk. At first his comrades mocked him, but soon they came to respect him, and would not talk wickedly when he was present.

5. A month went by, and then Gareth's mother was sorry that she had made her son vow to serve for a whole year and a day in Arthur's kitchen. She sent him a suit of armour, and said that he might now tell the king who he was, and become a knight.







**Sir Galahad.**

*(From the picture by G. F. Watts, R.A., O.M. By permission of Mrs. Watts.)*

Sir Galahad was the son of Sir Lancelot, and the purest and holiest of all Arthur's knights.



6. At this Gareth was very happy. He laughed and danced, and was almost beside himself with joy. Then he sought the king and cried, "Make me thy knight, but let my name be secret until I have done some worthy deed."

7. The king told him that he had known who he was from the beginning. Then he asked the young prince if he knew the vows which his knights must take. They must swear to be most brave, most gentle, most loving, most faithful, and most obedient.

8. Gareth said that he would promise to keep all these vows, and that he wished above all things to do some deed which would show that he was worthy of belonging to the king's noble band. Then the king took advice from Lancelot, and promised to give the young prince the first chance to "win his spurs."

9. The chance came that very day. A young and high-born maiden named Lynette came to the king with a tale of wrongs which she wished to be righted. She was very proud, and had pink and white cheeks, rather cold eyes, and a slightly turned-up nose.

10. She told the king that she had a sister named Lyonors who was very beautiful—more beautiful than she was herself, she said with a sly smile. Her sister lived in a castle, round which a winding river ran in three loops. She dared not leave the castle, lest she should be carried off by a knight who wished to marry her.

11. There were three bridges across the river, and no one could enter or leave the castle except by crossing one or other of these bridges. The knight who wished to marry Lyonors had three brothers, who guarded the bridges.

12. The most dreaded of the three brothers was said to be a huge, powerful man. A skeleton was painted on his black armour and a skull

on his helmet. He called himself Night. The other brothers went by the names of Morning Star, Noon Sun, and Evening Star.

13. When Lynette had told her story she begged the king to send his bravest knight to set her sister free.



**27. OH, HUSH THEE!**

1. Oh, hush thee, my baby! thy sire was a knight,  
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;  
The woods and the glens, from the towers  
which we see,  
They are all belonging, dear baby, to thee.
2. Oh, fear not the bugle, though loudly it  
blows,  
It calls but the warders that guard thy  
repose;  
Their bows would be bended, their blades  
would be red,  
Ere the step of a foeman draws near to thy  
bed.
3. Oh, hush thee, my baby! the time will soon  
come,  
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet  
and drum;  
Then hush thee, my darling! take rest while  
you may,  
For strife comes with manhood, and waking  
with day.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

### 28. GARETH AND LYNETTE.—III.

1. When Gareth heard Lynette's story, he cried, "A boon, Sir King. Send me against these knights." Arthur looked gravely at him and said, "Go!"

2. At this Lynette became crimson with anger. "O King," she cried, "I asked for thy chief knight, and thou givest me a kitchen-knave!" Then she turned, ran from the hall, mounted her horse, and rode away.



3. At once Gareth donned the armour which his mother had sent him, and taking his shield and spear mounted his horse and hastened after the maiden. He found her in a meadow outside the city. She was still very angry.

4. Gareth rode straight up to her and said, "Maiden, I am sent to set thy sister free. Lead on, and I follow." Lynette looked at him with scorn, and holding her nose between her finger and thumb, cried, "Hence! thou smellst of kitchen grease. Begone, for here cometh thy master, Sir Kay."



5. Sure enough Sir Kay was close at hand. He had ridden after his scullion, and now bade him return to the kitchen. Gareth said, "Thou art no longer my master, and I will not return." Then Sir Kay rode at him; but Gareth overthrew him, and cried again to the maiden, "Lead, and I follow."

6. At this she spurred her horse and galloped off, with Gareth following hard behind. Soon her horse was weary, and Gareth caught her up. Then she began to call him scornful names, such as "dish-washer" and "spit-turner," and said that he smelt so strongly of the kitchen that she could not bear to be near him.

7. Gareth, however, only smiled, and said gently, "Say what thou wilt. I will not leave thee until I have set thy sister free or am myself slain." The maiden again replied scornfully, but Gareth was as calm and smiling as ever.

8. They rode on, and at dusk they came to the top of a hill from which they could see a round pool in a hollow below them. As they drew near to the pool they met a man who

cried out that robbers had seized his master and were about to drown him in the pool.

9. At this Gareth rode forward, and saw six robbers leading a man who was bound with ropes and had a huge stone about his neck. At once Gareth charged into the midst of them and struck down three of the knaves. The rest fled.

10. Then Gareth unbound the man, loosed the stone from his neck, and learnt that he was a baron and a friend of King Arthur's. His house was not far distant, so thither they took their way. Lynette went with them.

11. A great feast was spread in the hall, and Lynette sat in the highest seat with a roast peacock before her. Gareth took his seat beside her; but she rose at once, and said that she was a noble gentlewoman and would not sit beside a kitchen-knave.

12. The baron looked from the one to the other in dismay and said, "Friend, thou mayest be a kitchen-knave for all I know, but thou art a brave man, and hast saved my life." Then he placed Gareth in another seat, and took the young knight's place by the scornful maiden's side.

## 29. THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

ANOTHER FABLE FROM ÆSOP.

1. A little lamb once lost its way,  
And at a brook its thirst allayed ;  
A hungry wolf that sought its prey  
Drew near and made the lamb afraid.
2. “How dare you foul my drink,” cried he,  
“And stir up mud, I’d like to know !  
Rash creature, you shall punished be  
For troubling thus the water’s flow.”



3. "Good sir," the lamb cried, "do not frown,  
Nor be so angry, for you see  
I'm twenty paces lower down—  
The stream flows fast from you to me."
4. The lamb stood trembling on the brink,  
And then the wolf made this reply :  
"About a year ago, I think,  
You called me names as I passed by."
5. "How could I treat you then with scorn,"  
The lambkin cried, "or use you ill ?  
For you must know I was not born,  
And I am but a suckling still."
6. "Well, 'twas your brother—'tis the same."  
"I have no brother, sir," said she.  
"Then 'twas some other of your name  
Who did provoke and anger me."
7. "I'll be revenged whate'er you say."  
He sprang upon her with a bound,  
And in a trice the lambkin lay  
In cruel death upon the ground.

EDWARD SHIRLEY.



**30. GARETH AND LYNETTE.—IV.**

1. Next morning the youth and the maiden rode forth again. Lynette pretended to be just as proud as ever, but she allowed Gareth to ride by her side. "Thou wilt soon be slain," said she, "and then I shall go back to the king and shame him for sending a scullion to right my sister's wrongs."

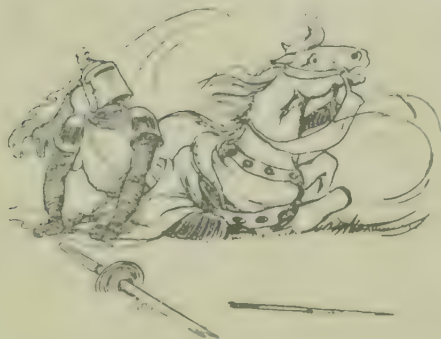
2. Gareth spoke gently to her, and on they rode in silence until they came to the first of the three bridges leading to the castle. On the bank of the river stood a gay tent of silk with a purple roof, and a crimson flag flying above it. The knight who lodged in the tent was Morning Star. He was unarmed.

3. When he saw Gareth he called to three maidens, who came out of the tent and arrayed him in blue armour. Then he mounted his horse, and Gareth rode to meet him. The knights set their spears, and dashed so fiercely at each other that both of them were thrown from their horses.

4. Gareth at once leaped to his feet, drew his sword, and drove his foe back from the bridge.

Lynette, who was watching the fight, cried, "Well struck, kitchen knave!"

5. At last Gareth smote Morning Star so heavily that he fell to the ground. He was



overcome, and Gareth took his shield. "I will slay thee," he cried, "unless this damsel begs for thy life." At first Lynette said she would ask no favour of a scullion, but when Gareth lifted his sword to

slay the knight she changed her mind and begged his life.

6. At this Gareth put up his sword, and told Morning Star to go to Arthur's hall and say that the king's kitchen-knave had sent him. Then turning to the damsel he said, "Lead, and I follow."

7. Lynette spurred her horse, and Gareth rode behind her. At length he caught her up, and she said, "When I watched thee fighting on the bridge, the smell of the kitchen seemed to grow fainter. Now the wind has changed, and I smell it twenty times more than before.

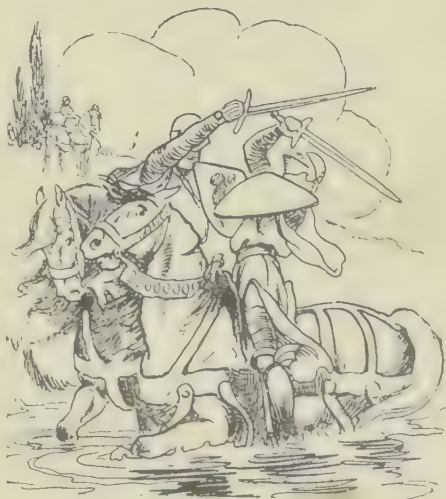
Do as I bid thee. Get thee gone, for the second knight will surely slay thee."

8. Gareth only laughed and rode onward, eager to meet his foe. At the second winding of the river they saw the knight, who was called Noonday Sun. He rode a red horse, and was clad in shining armour.

9. When he saw Gareth he plunged into the river to meet him. Gareth spurred his horse into the water, and the knights fought in mid-stream. When four sword strokes had been struck Noonday Sun's horse slipped, and its rider would have been drowned had not Gareth helped him to shore. Then he yielded.

10. Gareth sent the knight to the king, and turning to Lynette said, "Lead, and I follow." She rode by his side in silence, and Gareth asked, "Hath not the wind changed?"

11. "Nay," she replied, "not a point. Thou art victor, but it was chance that befriended thee. There is a ridge of slate in the bed of the stream, and on



that the horse of thy foe slipped. Thou hast yet to meet Evening Star."

12. Gareth smiled, and was so joyful that he lifted up his voice and sang a sweet song about flowers and birds. The scornful maid told him plainly that he knew nothing of flowers except how to put them on the meats which he served at table, and that all he knew about birds was how to baste them when they were roasting. With such scornful talk she rode onwards.

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### 31. GARETH AND LYNETTE.—V.

1. At length Gareth and Lynette came to the third bridge, which was guarded by the knight known as Evening Star. When he saw them coming he called to an old woman, who came from the tent behind and armed him in old armour.

2. Then he took his shield, mounted his horse, and rode on to the bridge. Gareth charged at him and overthrew him; but he sprang up, and Gareth fought with him on foot. Again and again Gareth struck him down, but in a moment he was up again.



3. The fight was fast and furious. Gareth hewed great pieces out of his foe's armour, but his sword was turned by the tough suit of leather which the knight wore underneath. At length the sword of Evening Star snapped off at the hilt, and Gareth cried, "I have thee now!"

4. The knight, however, sprang upon Gareth and wound his arms round him until he was almost strangled. With a mighty effort Gareth freed himself and cast the knight headlong into the river.



5. Then he turned to Lynette and said, "Lead, and I follow" By this time all her scorn was gone, and she said meekly, "I lead no longer. Ride thou at my side. Thou art the most kingly of all kitchen-knaves."

6. Evening now drew on, and Lynette showed Gareth the way to a cavern not far off. In this cave the servants of Lyonors, her sister, had hidden meat and drink for the knight who should come to free her.

7. As they drew near to the cave a horseman came softly up behind them, and cried, "Stay, felon knight, I will fight with thee." Gareth turned and fought with him, but at



one touch of the stranger's spear he fell to the earth. So cleverly and neatly was Gareth unhorsed that he could not help laughing.

8. When Lynette heard him laugh she became angry, and once more called him a kitchen-knave. Gareth then told her that he was no kitchen-knave, but the son of a king. At this the knight raised the front of his helmet, and to their surprise they found that he was none other than Lancelot.

9. The king had sent Lancelot to follow Gareth, and to see that no harm befell him. Lancelot thought that Gareth had been slain, and that the knight whom he saw riding with the maiden had overthrown him. When Gareth knew that he had fallen before the spear of Lancelot he felt no shame.

10. Then all three went to the cavern and supped together. In the morning they started

off again to meet the last of the four knights. His name, you will remember, was Night, and he was the most to be feared of them all.

11. At length they came to the castle, and saw in the distance the Lady Lyonors waving her hand to them from a window. On the flat meadow land by the side of the castle were a great black tent, and a tree with a horn hanging from it.

12. Gareth seized the horn and blew three loud blasts on it. At the third blast he saw before him a high black horse.

On its back sat a monster in black armour. A skeleton was painted on the armour and a skull on the helmet.

13. For a moment Gareth felt afraid. Within the castle the Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and wept, while one of her maidens swooned with fright. Just then Lancelot's horse neighed, and the black horse started back and threw its rider to the ground. As he rose Gareth leaped on him, and with one stroke cleft his helmet in twain.



14. Imagine his surprise when he saw through the broken helmet the bright, fresh face of a boy!

“Knight,” cried the boy, “slay me not, for my three brothers forced me to do this. They never thought that any one would pass all three of them, and meanwhile they wished me to frighten the people of the castle.”



15. Gareth let the boy go unharmed; then he and his companions entered the castle. The Lady Lyonors made a great feast for them, and they spent many merry hours together. Some say that Gareth afterwards married Lyonors; others say that he married Lynette. What do you think?

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### 32. THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

1. I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.



2. I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where ;  
For who has sight so keen and strong  
That it can follow the flight of song ?

3. Long, long afterward, in an oak  
I found the arrow, still unbroke ;  
And the song, from beginning to end,  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

LONGFELLOW.

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### 33. THE STORY OF SIR GALAHAD.—I.

1. You know that Sir Lancelot was the bravest and most skilful of all Arthur's knights. I will now tell you the story of his still more famous son, Sir Galahad. You will not find the story in the verses of Lord Tennyson, though he wrote a beautiful song about Galahad. The story which I am going to tell you is taken from Sir Thomas Malory's great book.

2. Galahad was a beautiful child, and soon after his birth he was handed over to the care of twelve nuns, who lived in a quiet abbey. The boy grew up in this happy, peace-

ful home, and he was just as good and as God-fearing as he was noble in face and form.

3. One day Sir Lancelot came to the abbey and heard the beautiful youth singing,—

“My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.”

He talked with the nuns, and they told



him that Galahad longed greatly to be one of Arthur's knights. So Sir Lancelot made his son a knight, and said, “God make him a good man.”

4. Lancelot left the abbey, but Galahad did not go with his father. He knew that the nuns loved him dearly, so he stayed behind a little longer to comfort them.

5. Lancelot rode to Camelot, where he found that Arthur's knights had come together for a great

feast. Arthur was glad to see Lancelot, and said, "Now all the seats at our table will be filled." Nothing pleased Arthur so much as to see all his knights around him.

6. When the knights stood round the table, one place was found to be empty. On it were words newly written in letters of gold, saying that the seat was not to be filled until four hundred and fifty-four years after the death of our Lord. "This is the very day," cried Lancelot; "the seat will be filled to-day. Let us cover the letters with a silken cloth until the chosen knight appears."

7. This was done, and the knights were about to sit down when Sir Kay bade them pause. He said that they would break an old custom if they sat at meat before some wonderful thing had been seen or done.

8. "True," said the king, and just as he was speaking a squire came in and told them a strange tale. "Sir," said he, "I have just seen a great stone floating in the river; a sword is thrust into it."

9. The king and his knights went at once to the riverside, and there they saw that

the squire's tale was true. A block of red marble was floating on the water, and in it was a sword on which these words were written: "No man shall take me but him to whom I belong, and he shall be the best knight in the world."

10. The king turned to Lancelot and bade him take the sword. "It is surely thine," said he, "for there is no truer knight living." "Nay," replied Lancelot, "it is not my sword. If I should take it, it would wound me sore."

11. Then the king turned to his next best knight, and he strove hard to pull the sword out of the stone, but could not stir it. Then another knight did his best, but he failed too. "We will now dine," said Sir Kay, "for we have seen a wonderful sight."

12. So the knights trooped into the hall, and sat at meat. Suddenly all the doors and windows closed of themselves, and the place became dark. Then one door opened, and in came





an old man leading Galahad by the hand. He had no sword or shield ; an empty scabbard hung by his side.

13. "Peace be with you," said the old man. "I bring here a young knight, who will do wondrous deeds in this realm, and will see the Sacred Cup from which Our Lord drank at the Last Supper." Now this cup had been long lost, and could only be seen by those who were pure of heart.

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### 34. THE STORY OF SIR GALAHAD.—II.

1. The king was right glad when he heard these words. Then the old man led Galahad to the empty seat, and the silken cloth was lifted from the table. Strange to say, the letters were now changed, and read as follows : "This is the seat of Galahad, Knight of the Pure Heart."

2. When the feast was over, the king went to the young knight, and said, "Sir, ye be welcome." Then he took him by the hand and led him to the riverside, where the strange red stone still floated on the water. "Many



THE YOUNG KNIGHT.

*(From the picture by G. F. Watts, R.A., O.M. Photo by Hollycr.)*

of my knights have failed to draw the sword out of this stone," said he; "see what thou canst do."

3. Galahad said that the sword was surely his, for he wore its scabbard by his side. Then he laid his hand on the sword, lightly drew it out of the stone, and put it into its sheath. "God hath sent thee this sword," said Arthur, "and He will send thee a shield also."

4. Let me tell you how Galahad won his shield. He went forth from Camelot, and rode into the country for four days. Towards evening on the fourth day he came to a white abbey, where he supped with two of Arthur's knights, one of whom was a king. This king told Galahad that there was a snow-white shield with a red cross hanging behind the altar of the church, but that only the best knight in the world could carry it. Any other man who bore it away would be either wounded or dead within three days.

5. "I know well that I am not the best knight in the world," said the king; "yet I shall take the shield." He did so, and rode away down the valley.

6. After the king had ridden two miles, a knight in white armour on a white horse met him, and fought with him. The king was wounded, and the victor said, "Thou hast done thyself great harm, for this shield can only be borne by the good knight Sir Galahad. He is the best knight in all the world." Then the white knight sent the shield to Galahad, who hung it round his neck joyfully.

7. Galahad rode on to a mountain, where he found an old deserted chapel. Here he knelt before the altar and asked God to guide his footsteps. As he did so he heard a voice which said, "Go to the castle of maidens and set the damsels free."

8. At these words Galahad rose from his knees, mounted his horse, and rode away until he came to a strong castle, by the side of which flowed the river Severn. Here he met a man who told him that seven knights had seized the castle from the maiden who owned it, and that they kept her captive within it, along with other maidens.

9. Galahad prepared himself for battle, and rode towards the gate. As he did so the



seven knights came forth to meet him. Galahad couched his spear, and smote the foremost to the ground ; but the rest rode at him. They struck fierce blows on his shield, but their spears were at once broken into splinters. At this Galahad drew his sword, and pressed them so hard that they turned and fled. Then he set the maidens free and rode on his way again.

10. I cannot now tell you all that befell Sir Galahad, but I must pass on to his death. All his life long he went to and fro seeking the Sacred Cup, which only the pure in heart could behold. All the rest of Arthur's knights sought it too, but none of them ever really beheld it but Sir Galahad. It was with him wherever he went ; he saw it faint by day and blood-red by night.

11. One evening Sir Galahad and a knight named Percivale found themselves on a high hill with a dark and evil swamp around it. Across this swamp there was a narrow pathway with many bridges. Galahad rode along the pathway ; but Percivale could not follow him, for the bridges caught fire and burned away as the pure knight's charger passed over them.

12. Percivale stood on the edge of the swamp and watched the silver armour of his friend grow fainter and fainter in the distance. Then when Galahad at last reached the shore of the great sea, a sound of angel voices arose, and for one moment his form stood out clear as a star. Above his head was the Sacred Cup, redder than any rose.

13. For a moment only did Percivale see Galahad, and catch a glimpse of the pearly gates and the golden walls of the heavenly city. Then dark shadows closed in, and Galahad was seen no more. He had won the great prize where all others had failed. And he had won it, not because of his strength, or skill, or good fortune, but simply because his heart was pure.



### 35. THE LAND OF STORY-BOOKS.

1. At evening when the lamp is lit,  
Around the fire my parents sit ;  
They sit at home and talk and sing,  
And do not play at anything.

2. Now with my little gun I crawl  
All in the dark along the wall,  
And follow round the forest track  
Away behind the sofa back.
3. There in the night, where none can spy,  
All in my hunter's camp I lie,  
And play at books that I have read  
Till it is time to go to bed.
4. These are the hills, these are the woods,  
These are my starry solitudes ;  
And there the river by whose brink  
The roaring lions come to drink.
5. I see the others far away,  
As if in firelit camp they lay ;  
And I, like to an Indian scout,  
Around their party prowled about.
6. So when my nurse comes in for me,  
Home I return across the sea,  
And go to bed with backward looks  
To my dear Land of Story-books.

R. L. STEVENSON.

(By permission of

Messrs. Longmans, Green, and Co.)



### 36. THE STORY OF LUD AND LEVELYS.—I.

1. In one of the colleges at Oxford there is a book which was written some six hundred years ago. It is called the "Red Book of Hergest," and it contains a number of very old Welsh stories. How old these stories are we do not exactly know, but we may be sure that some of them are at least as old as the days of King Arthur. Let me tell you a story from this famous book.

2. Beli, the great King of Britain, had four sons; the eldest was named Lud, and the youngest was named Levelys. When Beli died Lud became king in his father's stead. He was a mighty warrior, and he grew to be very rich and powerful.

3. Now the great city by the side of the river Thames had long fallen into ruins. Lud rebuilt its walls and fenced it round with many strong towers. Then he bade the men of the city build for themselves the best houses in the land. They did so, and Lud was well pleased. He lived in the city,



and gave meat and drink to all who came to his castle.

4. Though Lud had many cities, he loved the city by the Thames best of all. He dwelt in it for the greater part of the year, and for this reason the city was called *Caer Lud*—that is, Lud's Fort. After the Romans came to the island and seized it, the city was known as London.

5. Lud loved Levelys best of all his brothers, because he was one of the wisest men who ever lived. Levelys heard that the King of France had died, leaving a daughter to follow him on the throne. At once he went to his brother and said that he wished to go to France and marry the young queen, not so much for his own welfare, but for the honour and glory of Lud and his kindred.

6. Lud was glad when he heard this, and at once made ready a number of ships and filled them with armed knights. Then Levelys set sail for France. As soon as he landed he sent messengers to the nobles of France, and told them why he had come.

7. Now the nobles knew that Levelys was

a very wise man, and they thought that he would make a good king. So they went to the princess and begged her to take the British prince for



her husband. When she saw him she loved him, and soon Levelys and the princess were married. Thus Levelys became King of France, and a very wise and good king he proved to be.

8. After a time three plagues fell upon the island of Britain, such as no man had known

before. The first was that a certain race of men called the Coranians came to the island and settled in it. Now these Coranians were magicians. By their magic they knew everything that was spoken in all parts of the island. No matter how softly a man might whisper his news, the wind would carry it straight to the Coranians. They could not be slain by the sword, because they were magicians.

9. The second plague was a shriek which was

heard in every home in Britain from time to time. This shriek went through people's hearts, and so frightened them that they grew pale and feeble. Many women and children lost their wits, and the animals ran to and fro as if stricken with madness. Many of the trees in the forest and many of the fish in the lakes and rivers died when they heard the terrible outcry.

10. Now for the third plague. However much food the king's servants might gather together in his palace, it all disappeared in the night. Even if a whole year's food and drink were brought into the house, it vanished before dawn.

11. No one could find out the cause of the second and third plagues, and King Lud was much cast down because he did not know how he might be freed from them. He called together all the nobles of the land and asked their advice, but they could not help him.

12. At last one of the nobles said, "Take advice, O King, of thy brother Levelys, King of France. There is no man so wise as he." This seemed good to Lud, and he made ready to cross over to France in order that he might speak with Levelys, his brother, on this matter.



### 37. A BOY'S SONG.

1. Where the pools are bright and deep,  
Where the gray trout lies asleep,  
Up the river and o'er the lea—  
That's the way for Billy and me.
2. Where the blackbird sings the latest,  
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweet-  
est,  
Where the nestlings chirp and flee—  
That's the way for Billy and me.
3. Where the mowers mow the cleanest,  
Where the hay lies thick and greenest  
There to trace the homeward bee—  
That's the way for Billy and me.
4. Where the hazel bank is steepest,  
Where the shadow falls the deepest,  
Where the clustering nuts fall free—  
That's the way for Billy and me.

JAMES HOGG.





**"Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest."**

*(From the picture by E. W. Waite in the Worcester Art Gallery. By permission of the Corporation of Worcester.)*

### 38. THE STORY OF LUD AND LEVELYS.—II.

1. Lud prepared his ships in secret and in silence, lest the news should come to the ears of the Coranians. When all was ready he and his chosen companions went on board the ships, and sailed towards the coast of France.

2. Levelys heard that a great fleet was on its way to his shores, and at once he fitted out ships and set off to meet his brother. When Lud saw the French fleet drawing near, he sailed forward in a single ship. Levelys did the same, and soon the two kings met. Each put his arms about the other's neck, and gave him welcome with brotherly love.

3. Then Lud told Levelys all about the three plagues, and begged for his advice and help. The kings dared not talk aloud lest the Coranians should catch their words. So Levelys took a horn of brass, and through this they spoke.

4. Strange to say, there was magic in the horn, and all the words that came through

it were harsh and bitter. When Levelys learnt this he sent for wine, and with it washed out the horn. In this way he put an end to the magic. Then the two brothers spoke loving words through the horn, and the Coranians could not hear them.

5. Levelys said he would give his brother some insects to take home with him. These were to be crushed and stirred up in water. Then Lud was to call the Coranians together along with his own people, and was to sprinkle the company with the charmed water. The Coranians would die, but his own people would suffer no harm.

6. "As for the second plague," said he, "this is the cause of it. There is in thy land a dragon which no man can see. From time to time a second dragon crosses the sea, and fights fiercely with thy dragon. During the fight thy dragon shrieks and makes a fearful outcry.

7. "In this manner thou shalt destroy him. When thou hast reached Britain once more, cause the island to be measured in its length







"By his magic he puts thy servants to sleep."

(From the picture by T. R. H. ...)



and breadth, and thus find out the place which is in the very middle of it. There thou shalt dig a pit, and in it put a great pot full of wine. Cover the pot with a satin cloth, and sit down to watch.

8. "Thou wilt see thy dragon fighting in the air with the dragon which has come from abroad. They will fight fiercely until they grow faint and weary. Then they will fall upon the satin cloth in the form of two pigs, and sink into the wine. This they will drink up, and then heavy sleep will overtake them.

9. "At once thou must fold the covering round the pigs, and carry them off. Put them in a stone chest, and bury them deep in the earth in the strongest place in thy kingdom. As long as they remain in this stone chest no dragons shall trouble the island of Britain.

10. "The cause of the third plague," said he, "is a mighty man who comes by night and carries off thy meat and drink. By his magic he puts thy servants to sleep, so that none of them has ever seen him. Thou must keep awake and watch thy food thyself. Put by thy side a great pot of cold water, and if

thine eyelids grow heavy, and sleep is about to overcome thee, plunge into the pot, and thou wilt be wakeful once again. Thus shalt thou see the man and overcome him."

11. Lud said that he would do all these things. Then he bade farewell to Levelys, and went back to Britain, taking with him the insects which his brother had given him.

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### 39. THE STORY OF LUD AND LEVELYS.—III.

1. As soon as Lud reached his own land he had the insects crushed and stirred up in water. Then he called together the Coranians along with his own people, and sprinkled the company with the charmed water. The words of Levelys proved true; the Coranians died, but the Britons remained unhurt. Thus the land was freed from the first plague.

2. Then Lud caused the island to be measured in its length and in its breadth, and he found that the middle spot of his kingdom was the city of Oxford. Here he caused the earth to be dug, and in the pit which was made he

placed a huge pot filled with wine, and covered it with a satin cloth.

3. Then he sat down to watch. When the sun sank he beheld the dragons fighting in the air. After a time they fell down upon the top of the satin in the form of pigs, and drew it with them to the bottom of the pot. At once they began to drink the wine, and when the pot was empty they fell into a deep sleep.

4. Lud folded the covering around them, and carried them off to the great mountain of Snowdon, where he dug a deep hole, and buried the dragons in a stone chest. Never again was the fierce outcry of the dragons heard in the land.

5. When this was ended, King Lud caused a feast to be prepared. When it was ready, he placed a great pot of cold water by his side, and, clad in his armour, sat down sword in hand to wait for the coming of the third plague.

6. About the third watch of the night he heard many sweet and soothing songs. His eyelids drooped, and he felt a great desire to sleep. At once he sprang into the cold water, and the desire passed away. Many a time did he do this as the long hours went by.

7. At last a man of vast size, clad in strong armour, came in bearing a hamper. The man went to and fro in the house, and gathering up all the food and drink put them into his hamper. Lud was amazed to see how much it could hold.



8. The man put the hamper on his shoulder, and was about to leave the house when Lud sprang up. "Stop, stop," said he; "thou hast done me much harm, but now thou shalt fight with me."

9. The man put down the hamper, and fought fiercely with the king. They struck sparks from their swords, but Lud could not wound his foe. At last he put aside his sword, flung his arms about the man, and threw him to the ground.

10. The man begged for mercy. "I will give thee back all that I have taken from thee," said he, "and I will be thy faithful servant for life if thou wilt but spare me." Then Lud spared the man, and he was true to his word.

11. Thus Lud freed the island of Britain



from its three plagues, and for the rest of his life he ruled the land in peace and plenty. So ends the story of Lud and Levelys.

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#### 40. THE PEDLAR'S CARAVAN.

1. I wish I lived in a caravan,  
With a horse to drive, like a pedlar-man !  
Where he comes from nobody knows,  
Or where he goes to, but on he goes !
2. His caravan has windows two,  
And a chimney of tin, that the smoke comes  
through ;  
He has a wife, with a baby brown,  
And they go riding from town to town.
3. Chairs to mend, and delf to sell !  
He clashes the basins like a bell ;  
Tea-trays, baskets ranged in order,  
Plates, with alphabets round the border !
4. With the pedlar-man I should like to roam,  
And write a book when I came home ;  
All the people would read my book,  
Just like the Travels of Captain Cook !

W. B. RANDS.

#### 41. LAYAMON.

1. I have already told you that Geoffrey of Monmouth first wrote down the stories of Arthur and his knights. These stories gave great delight to all who read them. But as they were written in Latin, few people but churchmen could read them.

2. You know that at this time Norman kings were ruling in England, and all the rich and mighty in the land spoke French. You may be sure that it was not long before Geoffrey's book was turned into that tongue.

3. The man who turned Geoffrey's book into French was named Wace. He was a monk who lived all his life in Normandy. He was also a poet, and he turned Geoffrey's book into French poetry. When it was finished, the poem was very different from the book which Geoffrey wrote. There were many stories in it which Geoffrey had never heard of.



4. Now at this time there was an English priest named Layamon

living in the parish of Ernley, on the Severn. It "came into his mind" to make a history of England in verse. He travelled far and wide, and at last managed to get three books—Bede's History in Latin, the same book in English, and Wace's poem in French.

5. Then he sat down to write. At the beginning of his poem he wrote as follows: "Layamon laid before him these books, and turned over the leaves; lovingly he beheld them. May the Lord be merciful to him! Pen he took with fingers and wrote on book-skin, and the true words set together, and the three books pressed into one."

6. Layamon turned into English verse all that was in Wace's book, and a good deal which he found in the works of other writers. He added new stories about Arthur and his knights, and thus he was the first poet to tell these grand old tales in English verse.

7. We ought to be grateful to this good priest for writing his poem in English. It was then a poor, despised tongue, and the king and his nobles scorned to use it. They thought that it was only fit for ploughmen and shepherds.





and what had he to do with the history of our country? Do you remember the story of the capture of Troy? When the Greeks seized the city some of the Trojans escaped. Amongst them was a noble named Eneas, who sailed away from Troy and became king of the people who lived near the spot where Rome now stands. The Brutus about whom Layamon writes was his great-grandson. When Brutus was a boy an arrow from his bow accidentally slew his father, and for this his people banished him.

11. Brutus went to Greece, where he joined himself to a number of Trojans who wished to seek a land of their own. He led them forth, and a goddess directed him to Albion—that is, to our island. After many adventures he and his men reached Albion and conquered it. Brutus became king of the island, and called it Britain, after his own name. I need not tell you that the whole story is a mere fairy tale.

12. In the next lesson I shall tell you the story of King Lear, which we find in Layamon's book. The great writer Shakespeare made a noble play out of this story, and I shall tell it to you as he wrote it.



“I love your majesty  
According to my bond; nor more nor less.”

(From the picture by W. H. Margetson.)

**42. THE STORY OF KING LEAR.—I.**

1. When the story opens, Lear, King of Britain, was an old man eighty years of age. He had ruled his land for many years, but now he felt himself too weary and too feeble for the cares and duties of a king. He therefore made up his mind to hand over his kingdom to others, so that he might have time to prepare for death, which he knew must happen before long.

2. He had three daughters—Goneril, the wife of the Duke of Albany; Regan, who was married to the Duke of Cornwall; and Cordelia, a young and beautiful maiden. The King of France and a great duke wished to marry Cordelia, and both of them were then staying in Lear's palace.

3. One day Lear called his three daughters to him, and begged them to tell him how much they loved him. He meant to divide his kingdom amongst them, but before he did so he wished to know if they well and truly loved him.

4. Wise people know that it is deeds which

count, and not words. But Lear was very old and headstrong, and had become a little foolish. He paid for his foolishness very dearly, as we shall see.

5. First, Lear asked Goneril to say how much she loved him. Goneril told him that she loved him more than tongue could tell. He was dearer to her than the light of her own eyes; she loved him better than life itself. All her love belonged to the king, her father.

6. Now this was pretence, for Goneril was a hard, cruel woman. The old king, however, was very pleased, and he gave her and her husband one-third of all his kingdom.

7. Then he called Regan to him, and bade her say how much she loved him. Regan was just as false as her sister Goneril, but she said that she loved her father far better than her sister did, and that she knew no joy at all when she was away from him. Lear was very happy when he heard this, and he gave her and her husband a third of his kingdom.

8. Then he called Cordelia to him, and asked her what she had to say. He thought that she would please him by making even



more loving speeches than those of her sisters. She had always been his darling, and he had been very kind to her.

9. Now Cordelia loved her father dearly, but she loved truth even better. She felt ashamed of her sisters when she heard them pretending to love the old king in order to get land and riches from him. It was a mean and base thing to do, and she would never speak so falsely to one whom she loved so much. So she told the king that she loved him as a daughter ought to love her father—no more and no less.

10. The old man was very angry, and he bade her think over what she had said. "Unless you mend your speech," said he, "you will mar your fortune." Then Cordelia told him that she did truly love him and honour him, but that she could not speak as her sisters had done. If they only loved their father and no one else, why had they married their husbands? If she should ever wed, she would give half her love, and half her care, and half her duty to her husband.

11. Then Lear began to storm and rage. He

had meant to give Cordelia a third of his kingdom, but now he said that he would give her nothing at all. Her third should be divided between her two sisters.

12. Then he called together his nobles, and told them that henceforth he was king only in name. His two daughters, Goneril and Regan, and their husbands should rule the kingdom in his stead. He would live with Goneril and Regan month and month about, and a hundred of his knights should wait upon him.

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### 43. THE STORY OF KING LEAR.—II.

1. When the wise men heard this they were full of sorrow. Only one of them dared speak his mind to the king. He was the Earl of Kent, and he at once began to say a good word for Cordelia. The king, however, was so angry that he bade the earl keep silence.

2. Kent, however, was too good a man to be silent when he saw wrong being done. He said that he knew Cordelia well, and that he was sure she loved the king far

better than her sisters did. She had spoken plainly because she was ashamed of the false words which her sisters had used.

3. Then the king's anger was turned against his faithful friend, and he bade him leave the kingdom and never return to it. Kent said that as his king was acting so unwisely he would rather go than stay.

4. The King of France and the duke who wished to marry Cordelia were then called in, and Lear told them that she had no lands, or riches, or any part of his kingdom. He thought that

when they heard this they would no longer wish to marry Cordelia; but he was mistaken, for the King of France took her by the hand and said that her goodness and truth were far more to him than any kingdom. He told her to bid her father farewell and come with him to France, where she should reign as his queen.

5. So Cordelia, with tears streaming down her cheeks, took leave of her father, and bade



her sisters love the old man well. Then she set out for France with her husband, and lived very happily in that fair land.

6. No sooner had she gone than her wicked sisters began to show how false they were. Lear was to spend the first month with Goneril, but scarcely a week had passed before she began to treat him unkindly. Every

time she met her father she frowned on him, and when he wished to speak to her she said that she was sick and could not see him. At last she told him plainly that he must send fifty of his knights away.

7. The old king was very proud, and he could not at first believe his ears. He

had given his eldest daughter half of his kingdom, and now she grudged him his train of knights! Surely she could not mean what she said! Goneril, however, was still hard and cruel, so the old man said that he and his knights would leave her palace and go to





the house of Regan, who would be certain to treat him well.

8. Meanwhile the good Earl of Kent had left the kingdom, and had come back again in disguise. He sought Lear and asked if he might be his servant. The old king, not knowing who he was, said that he might serve him.

9. Lear now sent Kent with letters to Regan, telling her that he was about to come with his knights to stay with her. But Goneril had already written to her sister, and had advised her not to let the king bring his knights with him.

10. When Lear reached Regan's palace there was no one to meet him. He sent a messenger for Regan and her husband, but he was told that they were weary. At this he grew so angry that they thought it better to see him.

11. Then Lear entered his daughter's hall. Imagine his anger and disgust when he saw the hated Goneril standing by her sister's side! She had set Regan against her father.



#### 44. THE STORY OF KING LEAR.—III.

1. Lear thought that Regan would be kinder to him than Goneril had been, but in this he was quite mistaken. She was harder and more cruel than her sister, and said that he must send away all his knights but twenty-five.

2. Then Lear was almost heart-broken. He turned to Goneril and said that he would go back with her, for fifty was double five-and-twenty, and, therefore, her love was twice as much as Regan's. But Goneril said that she had changed her mind. He did not need even five-and-twenty knights. Her servants and her sister's servants would wait upon him.

3. Do you not pity the poor old man even though he had brought all this unkindness upon himself? His anger was terrible. He stormed and raged so much that he lost his wits. Then he strode from the house, and only Kent went with him.



4. A tempest was raging out-

side, but the old king heeded it not. All night long he brooded over the unkindness of his cruel daughters until he was quite mad. Then his servant, who, you will remember, was the Earl of Kent, took him to the castle at Dover, so that he might be amongst friends.

5. As soon as the king was safely lodged in the castle, the earl set sail for France, and hastened to the court of Cordelia. He told her how badly her father had been treated, and the loving daughter shed many tears when she heard the sad news. She begged her husband to give her an army, so that she might punish her wicked sisters. Her husband agreed, and before long she landed at Dover.

6. Meanwhile Lear had escaped from the castle, and was found wandering about the fields. He was in a sad plight. He had made a crown for himself out of straw and weeds, and was singing aloud as he roamed to and fro.

7. The poor old king was brought to the camp, and





"SHE ASKED HIS BLESSING."



kindly tended by doctors until he was well enough to see Cordelia. A sad but beautiful sight it was to see the meeting of father and daughter. Lear was full of joy at seeing his darling child once more, and full of shame to think how unkindly he had treated her.

8. He tried to fall on his knees to beg her pardon, but she would not let him, and knelt to him instead. She asked his blessing, and said that she was his child, his true and loving Cordelia.

9. Then she kissed him again and again to kiss away her sisters' unkindness. She said they ought to be ashamed of themselves to turn their kind old father out of doors into the tempest. She would not have driven out her enemy's dog on such a night, even though it had bitten her. It should have stayed by the fire and warmed itself until the wind and the rain had ceased.

10. She then told her father that she had come from France with an army to punish his cruel daughters. He should never leave her again, and she would be dutiful and loving to him all the days of his life.

11. So here we will leave this poor old king, happy once more with his faithful Cordelia. As for the cruel daughters, they and their husbands came to a sad end, as they well deserved to do. ↴



#### 45. BED-TIME.

The evening is coming,  
The sun sinks to rest ;  
The rooks are all flying  
Straight home to the nest.

“Caw !” says the rook, as he flies overhead ;  
“It’s time little people were going to bed !”

The flowers are closing ;  
The daisy’s asleep ;  
The primrose is buried  
In slumber so deep.

Shut up for the night is the pimpernel red ;  
It’s time little people were going to bed !

The butterfly, drowsy,  
Has folded its wing ;  
The bees are returning ;  
No more the birds sing—  
Their labour is over, their nestlings are fed ;  
It's time little people were going to bed !

Here comes the pony—  
His work is all done ;  
Down through the meadow  
He takes a good run ;  
Up go his heels, and down goes  
his head ;  
It's time little people were going  
to bed !

Good-night, little people,  
Good - night, and good -  
night ;  
Sweet dreams to your eyelids  
Till dawning of light ;  
The evening has come, there's no more to be said ;  
It's time little people were going to bed !



THOMAS HOOD.

## 46. KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

Little children, never give  
Pain to things that feel and live :  
Let the gentle robin come

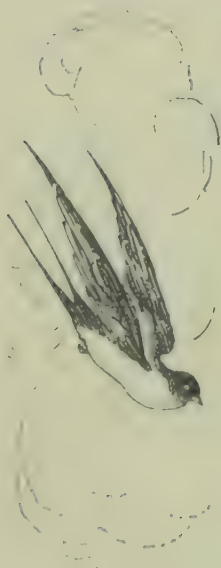
For the crumbs you save at home,—  
As his meat you throw along  
He'll repay you with a song ;  
Never hurt the timid hare  
Peeping from her green grass  
lair,

Let her come and sport and  
play

On the lawn at  
close of day ;

The little lark  
goes soaring  
high

To the bright windows of the sky,  
Singing as if 'twere always spring,  
And fluttering on an untired wing.—  
Oh ! let him sing his happy song,  
Nor do these gentle creatures wrong.

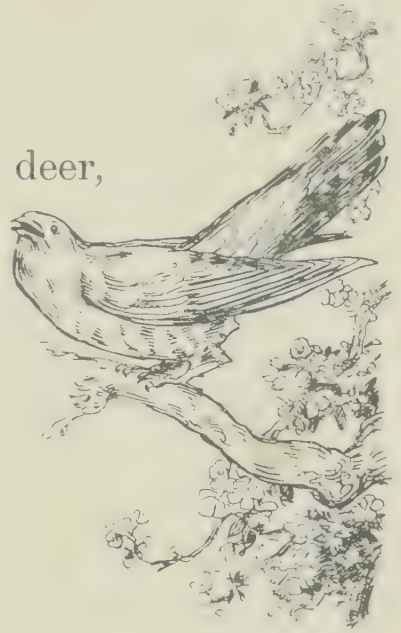




## 47. SUMMER IS A-COMING IN.

[This song was written and set to music about the year 1226—that is,  
in the reign of Henry III.]

1. Summer is a-coming in,  
Loudly sing cuckoo ;  
Groweth seed and bloweth mead,  
And springeth wood a-new,  
Sing cuckoo, cuckoo !
2. Ewe bleateth after lamb,  
Cow after calf doth moo,  
Pranceth steer and coucheth deer,  
And merry sing cuckoo,  
Cuckoo, cuckoo !
3. Well singest thou, cuckoo,  
Nor cease thou never now.  
Sing cuckoo now,  
Sing cuckoo, cuckoo,  
Sing cuckoo now !



## 48. THE WHITE CLIFFS OF ALBION.

1. Oh, the dear white cliffs of Albion are gleam-  
ing in the sun—  
'Tis a morning of delight for you and me ;

The balmy breeze is blowing, and the tide  
is gently flowing,  
And the little waves are dancing on the sea.

2. Oh, I leave the town behind me, and I climb  
the hilly road,  
Till I reach the Downs, far-spreading, fair  
and free,  
Where the sheep and goats are straying, and  
the boys and girls are playing  
In the happy hours of summer by the sea.

3. Oh, my heart is glad within me in this realm  
of quiet joy ;  
I can hear the lark's glad song above the lea,  
While the dog and lamb and wether lie down  
in peace together  
With the happy little children by the sea.

4. Oh, the vision flashes on me that the prophet  
saw of old—  
A smiling world from strife and tumult free,  
When the age of warfare's over, and the  
green and pleasant clover  
Grows around the useless cannon by the sea.

EDWARD SHIRLEY.



Peace.

(From the picture by Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A., in the National Gallery of British Art.)

# EXERCISES.

*(To be worked under the direction of the teacher.)*

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## LESSON 1.

1. Study the frontispiece, and answer the following questions in sentences :—

Where is the scene of this picture laid? Who is the central figure? About how old is he? How is he dressed? Who stands on the left of the picture? What is he doing? What does the picture on the tapestry represent? What is the old servant telling the boy? Why is he telling him about the brave deeds of his ancestor?

2. Answer the following questions in sentences :—

What companions have you which people of old had not? Which would you prefer to read a book or hear a minstrel sing? Why are books better than minstrels?

3. Make sentences containing the following words: minstrel, welcomed, heroes, disgrace, companion, composed, famous, library, museum.

4. Try to copy the little drawing of the boy with folded arms page 8.

5. Underline the *subjects* of the sentences in the first four lines Lesson 2.

## LESSON 2.

1. Describe the coloured picture on page 29.

2. Write out in your own words the first verse of "The Minstrel Boy."



3. Make sentences containing the following words: girded, betrays, chords, sully, slavery.

4. Do not suppose that the subject is *always the first word* in a sentence. Write out the subjects in the following sentences:—

Here stand I. Spoke the nurse to her mistress. Over the hills the aeroplane soared. Not a word said he.

### LESSON 3.

1. Write ten sentences about the coloured picture on page 19.
2. Make sentences containing the words: booty, prowled, seizing, warriors, comrades, waiting, deserted, sacrifices.
3. Find out all you can about Denmark.
4. Write six sentences, each containing a common noun. Now put a proper noun in place of each common noun. Note, all proper nouns must begin with a *capital letter*.

### LESSON 4.

1. Make a copy of the drawing of a ship on page 14.
2. Write down ten words connected with a ship, and put each of them into a sentence.
3. Describe in your own words Beowulf's voyage to Hrothgar's land.
4. Give three proper nouns for each of the following common nouns: queen, mountain, ocean, town.

### LESSON 5.

1. Make sentences containing the following words: doffed, kindred, greaded, paved, escape, combat, shriek, magic, bestow.
2. Describe the little picture on page 22.
3. Make a drawing of the cup which the queen holds in her hands (page 22).
4. Write six sentences, each containing one of the following proper nouns as the *subject*: Lord Roberts, the Thames, Shakespeare, France, Tennyson, Beowulf.

### LESSON 6.

1. Make sentences containing the following words: brooded, wail, arrow, perish, horrid, terrible.

2. Describe in your own words Beowulf's fight with Grendel's mother.

3. Copy, larger, the figure of the woman holding out her arms in welcome to Beowulf (page 27).

4. Common nouns which stand for *one thing* are said to be of the *singular number*. Common nouns which stand for *more than one thing* are said to be of the *plural number*. Turn these singular nouns into the plural: man, calf, mouse, goose, ox, church, penny, apple.

### LESSON 7.

1. You have now read the story of Beowulf. Answer the following questions in sentences:—

What kind of story is it? Why is it so grim and fierce? Do you think that all the story is true? Why not?

2. How was Beowulf killed? What memorial did he wish his friends to raise to him?

3. Copy, larger, the figure of Beowulf on page 27.

4. What is the *number* of the following nouns: cages, geese, family, bellows, knives, brother, cities, fox, chimneys? Give the singular or plural of each.

### LESSON 8.

1. Describe the coloured picture on page 32. It represents the band of the Duke of York's School for the sons of dead soldiers. Note the drum-major, the boys of the band, the widows, the boy who has left school and is now a drummer in the Guards, and his sister.

2. Write out in your own words verse 2 of "The Kitten at Play" (page 38).

3. Which do you prefer—poetry or prose? Say why.

4. Find words which rhyme with the following: day, sun, fly, peep. Try to make up four lines of verse, each pair of lines ending in a rhyme.

### LESSONS 9, 10.

1. Break up into feet the second and third verses of "The Kitten at Play" (page 38). Mark the strong beats.

2. Do the same with "The Vowels" (page 43).

3. Write out the pairs of words which rhyme in "The Poet's Song" (page 63).

4. Words which *stand for persons* are called *personal pronouns*. The following personal pronouns stand for *one person* (singular), and can form the *subject* of a sentence: I, thou, he, she, it. Make sentences containing these personal pronouns.

### LESSONS 11, 12.

1. Study very carefully the picture on page 40, and answer the following questions in sentences:—

How do you know that this is an old picture? What person is shown in the picture? What is he doing? What is he writing on? From what is he copying? What sort of writer is he? What does he do besides copy the words? What kind of books do you see in this writer's room?

2. Make a copy of the picture of the beggar on page 41.

3. Put the following words into sentences: thousand, ruined, doctor, lodging, library, perfect, clumsy, awkward, tablet.

4. Write out the *vowels*. *W* and *y* are sometimes vowels. You cannot say a word without a vowel sound in it. Which vowel is most commonly used?

5. The following personal pronouns stand for more than one person (plural), and can form the *subject* of a sentence: we, you, they. Make sentences containing these personal pronouns.

### LESSON 13.

1. Describe the coloured picture on page 49.

2. Make sentences containing the following words: abbey, heathen, Christians, ceasing, preacher, gospel, believed, refused, islet, wrought.

3. Try to copy the figure of the monk holding the torches (page 48).

4. Write six sentences about the British Museum Reading Room (page 44).

5. In writing a letter put your address and the date at the top right-hand corner of the paper, thus:—

24 Grange Street,  
Newcastle,  
June 1, 1913.

If the letter is to your father, begin it thus :—

*My dear Father,*—

Begin letters to (1) your mother, (2) your brother John, (3) your sister Susan. End them thus :—

*Your loving son* (or *daughter*, or *brother*, or *sister*),  
then add your Christian name :—

*Tom* (or *Mary*, or whatever your name is).

### LESSON 14.

1 Turn to the coloured picture on page 52, and answer the following questions in sentences :—

Of what book is this a page? In whose memory was it made? When and by whom was it made? In what language was it written? Why? How was it bound? What do you notice about the design on one side? What does this teach you? Where is the book now?

2. Copy a part of the border showing woven strands.

3. Make sentences containing the following words: raid, coffin, designs, treasure, tongue, pattern, plaids.

4. Write a letter to your mother telling her what you did in school this morning.

### LESSONS 15, 16.

1. Write out Lesson 15 in your own words.

2. Turn to the picture on page 56, and answer the following questions in sentences :—

Where is the scene of this picture laid? What building do you see on the cliff? What persons are descending from it? With what are they laden? Who leads them? What creatures is she lifting her hand to bless? Why?

3. Make sentences containing the following words: scene, landscapes, caves, glimpse, margin, famous, harbour, daughter, pious, custom, pleasure, beginning, composed, amazed, ignorant.

4. The following personal pronouns in the *singular* show *ownership*: my or mine, thy or thine, his, her or hers, its. Make sentences containing these personal pronouns.



## LESSON 17.

1. Write out the rhymes in these verses.
2. Tell in your own words what the wild swan, the lark, the swallow, the snake, the hawk did when the poet chanted his song.
3. Put the following words into sentences : melody, pause, down, stared, prey.
4. The following personal pronouns in the *plural* show *ownership*: our or ours, your or yours, their or theirs. Make sentences containing these personal pronouns.

## LESSON 18.

1. Tell in your own words what good work Bede did for England.
2. Copy the drawing of little Bede in the picture on page 64.
3. Put the following words into sentences : parents, heroes, abbot, famous, sentence.
4. In the case of *nouns* in the *singular* we show *ownership* by adding 's. Make the following *singular nouns* show ownership : child, boy, thief, fox, prince, princess.

## LESSON 19.

1. Write out the pairs of rhymes in these verses.
2. Copy the drawing of the boy with the bow on page 67.
3. Put the following words into sentences : flaxen, quaint, precious, lore, rout, eager, wondrous, maxim, rehearse, boon.
4. Most nouns form their plurals by adding *s*. We show *ownership* by putting (') after the *s*. Make the following plural nouns show ownership : millers, parents, flies, ladies, thieves, princesses.

## LESSON 20.

1. Turn to the coloured picture on page 71, and write six sentences about it.
2. Why was Alfred called "England's Darling"?
3. Make sentences containing the following words : history, pitiful, abbeys, scholar, urge, tongue, geography, fables, remembered, rulers.
4. What good work did Alfred do for England?

5. Make the following plural nouns show ownership: children, oxen, mice, geese.

### LESSON 21.

1. Study carefully the picture on page 74, and answer the following questions:—

Where is the scene of this picture laid? Who is the figure with the rod in his hand? What is there on the floor before him? What is he trying to do? How does he know what to do? What do you see on the table? What do you notice about the tablecloth?

2. Put the following words into sentences: despised, unlearned, conquest, interesting, wizards, magician, grieved.

3. Find out something about the Moors.

4. Write down in figures and letters—

(1.) A quarter-past ten in the morning, and at night. (2.) Half-past eleven in the morning, and at night. (3.) A quarter before nine in the morning, and at night.

### LESSON 22.

1. Write six sentences about the picture on page 80.

2. Make a little drawing of the shadow thrown by a stick at six o'clock in the morning, at noon, and at six o'clock in the evening.

3. Make sentences containing the following words: statue, hatchet, treasure, palace, surprised, figure, prevent.

4. Write out and learn the following:—

*Monday's* child is fair of face,

*Tuesday's* child is full of grace;

*Wednesday's* child is loving and giving,

*Thursday's* child works hard for its living;

*Friday's* child is full of woe,

*Saturday's* child has far to go;

But the child that is born on the *Sabbath* day

Is good, and fair, and wise, and gay.

### LESSON 23.

1. Study carefully the coloured picture on page 84, and answer the following questions in sentences:—

What do you see flowing through the middle of this picture? To

what city does the river run? Who lives in this city? How many groups of figures do you see in the foreground? How many maidens are there on the right? What is the leading maiden doing? What do you see behind the maidens? Who has charge of it? How is he dressed? Who are the girls behind the page? How do you know? What do you see on the other side of the river?

2. Read carefully the following verses :—

“On either side the river lie  
 Long fields of barley and of rye,  
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
 And through the field the road runs by  
     To many-tower'd Camelot;  
 And up and down the people go,  
 Gazing where the lilies blow  
 Round an island there below,  
     The island of Shalott.

“Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
 Little breezes dusk and shiver  
 Through the wave that runs for ever  
 By the island in the river  
     Flowing down to Camelot.  
 Four gray walls and four gray towers  
 Overlook a space of flowers,  
 And the silent isle embowers  
     The Lady of Shalott.”

Find out the meaning of the following words: wold, many-tower'd, willows, aspens, dusk, embowers.

3. Make an outline drawing of the dog in the coloured picture on page 84.

4. Put the following words into sentences: conquer, forefathers, fame, distress, ignorant, verses.

### LESSON 24.

1. What lesson does this fable teach you?
2. Put the following words into sentences: blithe, dread, morsel, frown, motto.

3. Write out this fable in your own words.
4. The following are short ways of writing certain words: Mr., Mrs., St. Write sentences containing these shortened forms.

### LESSON 25.

1. Read carefully the verse on page 91, and say in what way it differs from the verses on page 63.
2. Put the following words into sentences: adventures, ache, perils, pleaded, scullion, disguised, labourers, gleaned, knave, judgment.
3. Make a drawing of Gareth from the little picture on page 94.
4. You know that the predicate is the *telling part* of a sentence. The *telling* word in this telling part is called a *verb*. Make sentences containing the following verbs: run, speak, was beaten, flies, is going, swim.

### LESSON 26.

1. Tell in your own words what sort of youth Gareth was.
2. Put the following words into sentences: liked, disliked, pleasant, unpleasant, graceful, disgraceful, whistle, mocked, respect, armour, obedient, dreaded, skeleton.
3. Make a drawing of the castle on page 98.
4. Write out the verbs in paragraphs 11 and 12 on page 98.

### LESSON 27.

1. Who is supposed to sing this song? What do you learn about the baby from it?
2. Put the following words into sentences: sire, glens, bugle, warders, repose, foeman, trumpet, strife.
3. Write out the last verse in your own words.
4. Make sentences containing the following verbs: play, were running, have seen, am jumping, shall be enjoying.

### LESSON 28.

1. Study carefully the coloured picture on page 93, and answer the following questions:—  
Where is the scene of this picture laid? Whom do you see in the foreground? What is the condition of her horse? Why is it blown?



Who is the knight who has caught her up? What is she saying to him?

2. Tell in your own words the first two adventures of Gareth.

3. Put the following words into sentences: boon, crimson, hastened, grease, galloped, replied, seized, baron, barren.

4. Make sentences containing the following verbs: am going, is broken, are singing, were dancing, shall be speaking, will be playing, am breaking, have eaten.

### LESSON 29.

1. What is a fable? Find out something about Æsop, and read some of his other fables.

2. Put the following words into sentences: thirst, allayed, punished, troubling, reply, lambkin, provoke, revenged, trice.

3. Make a drawing of the lamb from the picture on page 103.

4. Write down rhymes for each of the following words: money, watch, ground, fellow, funny, just.

### LESSON 30.

1. Give an account in your own words of Gareth's fight with Morning Star.

2. Put the following words into sentences: maiden, pretended, crimson, purple, damsel, yielded, befriended, ridge, baste, roasting.

3. Write down the names of all the colours which you know. Put each name into a sentence.

4. Look at the sentence, There  $\frac{is}{was}$  many men outside. Now turn it into its straightforward form, thus: Many men  $\frac{is}{was}$  outside (there).

The subject is *men*, a plural noun. Now a plural noun in the subject must have a plural verb in the predicate. *Is* and *was* are singular, *are* and *were* are plural. Our sentence must therefore read, There  $\frac{are}{were}$  many men outside. Fill up the blanks in the following sentences:

There — nine men in the boat. There — a handsome carriage by the door. There — wounds on his body. There — a regiment of foot soldiers in the town. — there one book for each person?

## LESSON 31.

1. Describe the dress of a knight when he was ready for battle.
2. Put into sentences the following words : furious, tough, hilt, effort, slyly, cavern, felon, nearly, surprise, meadow, swooned, neighed, twain.
3. Write down the names of the noises made by the horse, the ass, the cow, the sheep, the cat, the dog, and the goose, and put each name into a sentence.
4. Ask teacher to let you have a little debate on this question—  
**Ought Lynette to have treated Gareth as she did?**
5. Fill up the blanks in the following sentences :—  
There — a crowd in the street. Where — the plates? Yonder — threescore children. Where — my scissors? — there a way out? — there any cabbages in the field?

## LESSON 32.

1. Say all you know about the bow. (You will see a boy with a bow in the little picture on page 67.)
2. Mark the feet in verse 2 of "The Arrow and the Song" (page 112), and show the strong beats.
3. Tell in your own words the story of "The Arrow and the Song." What lesson do you learn from it?
4. Put into sentences the following words : arrow, breathed, flight, beginning. What word in verse 3 would be wrong if used in prose?
5. Fill up the blanks in the following sentences :—  
There — a man lying on the ground. There — three crows sat on a tree. There — no wells in the desert. There — shepherds abiding in the fields. There — a gun in his hand.

## LESSON 33.

1. Write out and learn the following verse :—  
    " My good blade carves the casques of men,  
       My tough lance thrusteth sure ;  
       My strength is as the strength of ten,  
       Because my heart is pure."  
What are the "casques of men"? Who is supposed to be speaking?

2. Put into sentences the following words: peaceful, custom, marble, scabbard, sacred.

3. In what other story have you read about a block or stone with a sword thrust into it? Tell this story. (See "Highroads of History," Book II., Lesson 2.)

4. Make a little drawing of Lancelot's sword in the picture on page 114.

5. Note this sentence: A *collier* works in a *colliery*. Fill up the blanks in the following:—

A smith works in a —. A baker works in a —. A nurse works in a —. A tanner works in a —.

### LESSON 34.

1. Write six sentences about the picture on page 118.

2. Read paragraph 4, and then make a drawing of Galahad's shield.

3. Tell in your own words the story of Galahad's end.

4. Put into sentences the following words: shield, valley, victor, deserted, altar, captive, couched, charger, angel, glimpse, pearly, fortune.

5. Turn the following sentences into the plural:—

I was in the smith's company. He is a member of my club. She was on the soldier's horse. It is near the monk's house. I was in my bed.

### LESSON 35.

1. The little boy in this poem says that he loves to "play at books that I have read." What books have you read that you could play at?

2. Copy the figure of the little boy when he is "like to an Indian scout."

3. Put into sentences the following words: parents, camp, solitudes, warning, scout, prowled.

4. We often use the personal pronoun *you* for one person. In grammar, however, it is always plural, even though it may stand for one person. Look at the sentence, *Was* you there? As *you* is always in the plural number, we must say, *Were* you there? Correct the following:—

Was you on board the ship? You was quite right. Was you and

her invited? Were he in the boat? You was speaking when her went away.

### LESSON 36.

1. Tell me in your own words why London is said to be so called.
2. What were the three plagues of Britain?
3. Put into sentences the following words: colleges, exactly, welfare, messengers, whisper, shriek, stricken, disappeared, vanished, plagues, advice.

4. Correct the following:—

Are he coming? Is the apples good? Are I the first? We was playing in the meadow. Was we right, or was we wrong? Who is it?—me. Where were I then?

### LESSON 37.

1. Write six sentences about the coloured picture on page 129.
2. Put into sentences the following words: trout, lea, nestlings, hazel, clustering.
3. What do you know about the trout, the blackbird, and the bee?
4. What do you know about the hawthorn and the hazel?
5. Look at this sentence: We *plays* on the sand. It is wrong. The verb *plays* is singular; *play* is plural. Correct the following:—

We jumps on the floor. Jim and me picks flowers. They swims out to the ship. Tom and his brother steals apples. I grows taller every day. We talks about you.

### LESSON 38.

1. Study the coloured picture on page 132, and write ten sentences about it.
2. Put into sentences the following words: secret, silence, brotherly, insects, sprinkle, charmed, dragon, measured, wakeful.
3. Tell in your own words how Lud was advised to get rid of the second plague.
4. Make a drawing of the horn in the picture on page 131.
5. Fill up with suitable *nouns*, *pronouns*, or *verbs* the blanks in the following exercises:—  
John — to me. William and Mary — on the sands. You — me



a book. Now he — up. — walks quickly. — play football. Tomorrow — goes to London. — speaks to me. — were shot. By the stream — sits down.

## LESSON 39.

1. Write six sentences about the picture on page 136.
2. Put into sentences the following words: Britons, satin, Snowden, soothing, desire, hamper, amazed.
3. How did Lud get rid of the third plague?
4. Write out and learn the following lines:—

*January* brings the snow,  
Makes our feet and fingers glow;  
*February* brings the rain,  
Thaws the frozen lake again;  
*March* brings breezes loud and shrill,  
Stirs the dancing daffodil.

## LESSON 40.

1. Put into sentences the following words: caravan, pedlar, chimney, delf, alphabets.
2. Which should you prefer to travel about in—a motor or a caravan? Give your reasons.
3. Find out something about Captain Cook and his travels.
4. Write out and learn the following lines:—

*April* brings the primrose sweet,  
Scatters daisies at our feet;  
*May* brings flocks of pretty lambs,  
Skipping by their fleecy dams;  
*June* brings tulips, lilies, roses,  
Fills the children's hands with posies.

## LESSON 41.

1. Why ought we to be grateful to Layamon?
2. In what way, according to Layamon, did Britain get its name?
3. Put into sentences the following words: tongue, poetry, different, priest, parish, managed, grateful, despised, recognize, capture, banished, directed.

4. Write out and learn the following lines :—

Hot *July* brings cooling showers,  
 Strawberries, and gillyflowers ;  
*August* brings the sheaves of corn,  
 Then the harvest home is borne ;  
 Warm *September* brings the fruit,  
 Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

### LESSON 42.

1. Study the coloured picture on page 142 carefully and write an account of it.

2. Put into sentences the following words : eighty, weary, prepare, palace, headstrong, foolishness, pretence, base, honour, stead.

3. Suppose Lear's kingdom was worth £9,000,000. How much did he intend to give to each of his three daughters? How much each did Goneril and Regan get?

4. Make a little drawing of the pattern of that part of the floor on which Cordelia stands (page 142).

5. Write out and learn the following lines :—

Fresh *October* brings the pheasant,  
 Then to gather nuts is pleasant ;  
 Dull *November* brings the blast,  
 Then the leaves are whirling fast ;  
 Chill *December* brings the sleet,  
 Blazing fire and Christmas treat.

### LESSON 43.

1. Say what kind of man you think the Earl of Kent was.

2. Put into sentences the following words : ashamed, commanded, acting, reign, sought, disgust.

3. Make a drawing, larger, of the head of King Lear in the picture on page 148.

4. The following are names of countries : India, Russia, Arabia, Servia, Belgium, Italy, Canada, Australia, Norway. What do you call a native of each of these countries?

### LESSON 44.

1. Compare Cordelia with her sisters.

2. Write ten sentences about the picture on page 152.
3. Put into sentences the following words: servants, tempest, castle, treated, escaped, plight, roamed, tended, enemy, ceased.
4. The following are the names of countries: Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Holland. What do you call a native of each of these countries?

**LESSON 45.**

1. What signs of the coming of night are mentioned in this poem?
  2. What signs show us that day is breaking?
  3. Say what you know about the flowers named in verse 2.
- Put the following words into sentences: evening, rooks, overhead, primrose, pimpernel, drowsy, labour, meadow, dawning.
4. Make a little drawing of the old book on page 154.

**LESSON 46.**

1. What do you know about the robin, the hare, and the lark?
2. Why should we be kind to animals?
3. Put into sentences the following words: crumbs, timid, lair, lawn, soaring, fluttering, creatures.
4. Make sentences containing the names of six animals which live in hot lands.

**LESSONS 47, 48.**

1. Study the coloured picture on page 159, and describe it in your own words.
2. Copy the drawing of a cuckoo on page 157.
3. Put into sentences the following words: cuckoo, bleateth, gleaming, balmy, realm, wether, weather, whether, prophet, tumult, cannon.
4. Make sentences containing the names of three creatures living in cool lands and three creatures living in cold lands.

**ADDITIONAL EXERCISE.**

1. Which story in this book do you like best? Say why.
2. Which piece of poetry in this book do you like best? Say why.
3. Which picture in this book do you like best? Say why.
4. Which man mentioned in this book do you like best? Say why.

5. Which girl or woman mentioned in this book do you like best? Say why.

6. Which book mentioned in these pages do you wish to read when you are older? Say why.

7. Play this *word game*. The teacher names a character in this book, say *Gareth*, and then points quickly to a number of pupils in turn, each of whom has to name something connected with Gareth. This must be done while the teacher counts three. If the pupil pointed to cannot answer, he or she is "out." No one must name the same thing twice.

8. Write a letter to a friend telling him all about this book.

THE END.









